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ABSTRACT

This compilation presents materials associated with the 5-week summer session of the Samford University Writing Project, 1991. The compilation begins with curriculum vitae of staff, teacher consultants, and guest speakers. The compilation also presents lists of group and committee members and daily logs written in by participants in a wide variety of formats. Summaries of 14 presentations (on such topics as writing workshop conferences, writing to learn science, integrating fine arts into language arts, storytelling, building community through writing, publication of children's writing, creative problem solving, haiku, and writing in the math classroom) and samples of participants' writing form the major part of the compilation. (RS)

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The Samford University Writing Project

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IMPACT '91

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF WRITERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

David H. Roberts and Peggy A. Swoger, Editors

A COMPILATION OF THE TEACHING DEMONSTRATIONS, PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL WRITINGS, AND DAILY ACTIVITIES OF THE SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT, 1991

JULY 8 - AUGUST 8

SPONSORED BY : SAMFORD UNIVERSITY
ORLEAN BULLARD BEESON SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT

DAVID H. ROBERTS, DIRECTOR

PEGGY A. SWOGER, CO - DIRECTOR

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1991 SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Homewood School District
Mark Barber

Jefferson County School District
Donna Davis
Rebecca Dobelstein
Donald Garrett
Robin Leberte

Mountain Brook School District
Peggy Swoger, Project Director

Shelby County School District
JoAnne Hoffman
Lisa Pemberton
Marilyn Self
JoAnn Trenary
Carol Dean, Facilitator

Tuscaloosa City School District
Cindy Robicheaux

Vestavia Hills School District
Karen Jeane
Lynne King

Samford University
Dr. David Roberts, Project Director
Julie Stipe, student

The Samford Writing Project Fellows wish to dedicate IMPACT '91 to

Dr. Julian Prince

in appreciation of his support of the Samford University Writing Project

Forward

This book is dedicated to Dr. Julian Prince, Dean of the Orlean Bullard Beeson School of Education.

A casual observer may respond, "Oh, that's nice." But those people --educators, students, parents, civic leaders, and countless others--who know Dean Prince, his wisdom, his patience, his humor, his personality, and his love for high quality, effective education, will know that this is no ordinary, obligatory dedication to which an "Oh, that's nice" response is appropriate. Those people whose lives have been radically changed by Julian Prince know that an appropriate response is more like the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's "Messiah."

Dr. Prince would not liken his role as an education reformer to that of a messiah, but the students, parents, and teachers who have gained from his experience and vision would certainly agree that his life's work has given a new birth to careers and to their love for teaching and learning.

Reforming great cultural institutions can be threatening and intimidating to all concerned, but Julian Prince, undaunted, continues to serve all people, as he moves through his fourth decade of dedication to making the world better and to improving lives through education.

I can tell anecdotes and repeat what others have told me about Julian Prince's greatness, but I can speak with authority about what he has done for the teaching of writing in Mississippi and Alabama. For nearly three years, Dean Prince has provided unwavering support for the Samford University Writing Project. I have worked with writing projects long enough to know that there are at least three kinds of support for education reform programs such as the writing project: the "I think that's a good idea" support, the "That's interesting, let me know if I can help" support, and the "I'll do whatever I can to help you" support. All three are important, sincere responses from different types of people, but the Julian Prince support is not only of the "I'll do whatever I can to help you" variety, but he adds, "What else can I do?" One could think of that as the second mile, or the third, or more.

Thank you, Julian, for touching our lives in meaningful ways that have given additional meaning to teaching and learning in our lives. Thank you for giving us a reason for shouting, "Hallelujah!"

David Roberts
August 8, 1991

For Dave and Peggy

with love

Dearest Dave

We've seldom seen your face,
but you've made your presence known.
For it is your humble presence
that has made each of us grow.
Your devotion as our leader
wasn't always seen or heard,
but it is the same devotion
that is found within our words.
So how can we thank you
for all the things we've learned?
You have been the giver;
now we give to you our words...

Dearest Dave...

"The writing project has made
such a difference in my life.
I cannot wait to get back to the classroom."

"We average middle-class teachers
need to see a revolutionary like you."

"You are the dispenser of knowledge."

"Quiet, but with a delightful sense of humor-
you love writing and talking about writing,
writing about writing,
and reading about writing."

"You claim to have a "sick mind".
You have, instead, I think, a writer's heart."

"You are dedicated to your cause.
You are a talented writer."

"Your guidance and love for the written
word is evident in everything you do."

"Dave...inspiration...paradigms...paper work...
wild in college...computer whiz."

"Dave - who lies in a road for inspiration
and inspires all to think freely."

"You have made us your disciples so that we too
can spread the gospel of writing!"

"You have given us voice...
and we shall be heard."

The Samford University
Writing Project 1991

TO PEGGY

We came with shaky knees but open minds,
In need of help and hope.
We found in you a faithful friend who said,
'Keep on there is no end.'

'No right or wrong,
No first and last,
Just write, my friend, and learn.'

We wrote and watched and waited and wrote.
We learned to know ourselves.
You took our hearts and led us on to
Worlds we'd never known.

No here or there.
No this, then that.
Just 'discover the world as you go.'

You showed us art, and we wrote.
You gave us a rose, and we wrote.
We listened to you share your heart,
Became inspired--and wrote.

Then, as we wrote a passion grew
to share what we now knew.
You showed us as you walked with us
The way true teachers do.

Let go. Lead out.
Nudge gently. Care.
Let them write to learn.

Your passion became a part of us;
Your search became our quest.
You modeled for us teaching and
Friendship at its best.

From Samford Writing Project Members-1991
To our colleague, guide, and friend--
THANKS PEGGY!

CAROL

Kind and caring
A loving friend indeed.
Professional and objective
Who listens to our needs.

Committed as a writer
Helping us to guide our mind
Through the struggles we encountered
For thoughts we would not find.

Carol, you've shown us the way
You've given of yourself
You've taught us what to say.

And in return we thank you
For your life is your lyric
A melody of song
An echo of your spirit.

The Samford University
Writing Project 1991

The Writer In Me

Teachers teach writers
And writers write stories
Some of them fiction
And some of them true.

Words tell our feelings
Express our emotions
Gifts from our heart
A talent received.

Teachers bring out
The writer in me.

by
Imagination '91

This song is dedicated to the Samford Writing Project members of Impact '91 from the Samford Youth Writers of Imagination '91. Thank you for your dedication.

Imagination '91

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I. STAFF AND TEACHER CONSULTANTS

David Harrill Roberts

Professor of English
Director of University Writing Programs

Samford University
Birmingham, Alabama

Education

Ph. D. in English (rhetoric and linguistics), 1982
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Pennsylvania

M. A. in English (linguistics and literature), 1973
University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina

B. A. in English (language and literature), 1970
Lander College, Greenwood, South Carolina

Teaching Experience

1988 to -	Professor of English, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama
1985 to 1988	Associate Professor of English, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
1983 to 1985	Assistant Professor of English, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
1978 to 1983	Assistant Professor of English, Bluefield State College, Bluefield, West Virginia
1976 to 1978	Instructor in English, Bluefield College, Bluefield, Virginia
1975 to 1976	Instructor in English, John Tyler Community College, Chester, Virginia
1970 to 1971	High School English and Journalism Teacher, Wilson Hall High School, Sumter, South Carolina

Publications

Nine books written or edited, twenty-one articles and chapters written, twelve papers reproduced by ERIC Document Clearinghouses, hundreds of feature and news articles in newspapers, Baptist publications, alumni publications, and on the wire services; three college catalogues and one literary journal edited.

Educational Software Published

Eight educational computer programs developed for MS-DOS and Macintosh computers and distributed internationally.

External Grants and Contracts Received

Twenty-three external grants and contracts totalling $184,338.

Professional Activities

Thirty-seven presentations and other roles (chair, etc.) at professional meetings; nine professional board memberships; writing consultant for nine textbook publishers; curriculum consultant for two state departments of education and two literacy training programs; writing workshop leader in dozens of school districts, colleges, and universities; service on three advisory boards; technical manual editor for industry; Bantu languages consultant for ten educational institutions and other organizations in five nations in Africa; consulting linguist, Toronto Institute of Linguistics.

Current Professional Memberships

National Council of Teachers of English; Conference on College Composition and Communication; Alabama Council of Teachers of English.

Honors and Awards

Who's Who in the South and Southwest, 23rd Edition, 1992; Who's Who in American Education, 1991-92; The Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi, 1990-present; Who's Who in the South and Southwest, 22nd Edition, 1990; Who's Who in American Education, 1989-90; Research Award, National University Continuing Education Association, 1985; Exemplary Media Use Award, Bluefield State College, 1982; First Baptist Church Scholarship, Bluefield, WV, 1981; Summer Study Grant, Bluefield State College, 1981; Outstanding College News Bureau, Baptist Public Relations Association, 1978; First Bluefield College Honorary Alumnus, 1978; Outstanding Young Men in America, 1977, 1979; First linguist appointed career missionary, Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1973; Charles B. Keesee Scholarship, 1973; Julian A. Hodgens Scholarship, 1973; J. F. Thompkins Grant, 1973; Graduate Research Assistantship, Center for Editions of American Authors, University of South Carolina, 1971-72; First prize, Student-Faculty Essay Contest, Lander College, 1970; Charter Member, Blue Key National Honor Society, Lander College, 1970; Koinonia Honor Society, Lander College, 1969-70; Dean's List, Lander College, 1969.

Private Business

President, Roberts & Richards, Inc., Birmingham, AL, 1989-present. The corporation provides medical and education consulting services to clients in Alabama, California, New York, Texas, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Roberts & Richards is a software beta test site and conducts pre-publication evaluation of computer programs for international distributors. The firm also provides software support, through Research Design Associates, to RDA customers nationwide.

Sole Proprietor, Business and Education Computer Support, Hattiesburg, MS, 1983-1988. Provided computer consulting on hardware and software configurations; procurement, installation and training for hardware and software systems; maintained and modified hardware and software to meet clients' needs for clients in Mississippi, Wisconsin, Alabama; developed software currently in use across the country.

Peggy Ann Bullard Swoger

2071 Montreat Circle
Birmingham, Alabama 35216
(205) 822-5029

Mtn. Brook Junior High
205 Overbrook Road
Mtn. Brook, Alabama
35213
(205) 871-3516

Academic Background

BA, 1959, Howard College, Birmingham, Alabama. Major in English.

1968-1970, California State University at Long Beach. Graduate work in linguistics.

MA, 1972, University of Alabama in Birmingham. Major in English Education.

Teaching Experience

1973-present: English teacher, Grades 8 and 9
Mountain Brook Junior High
Mountain Brook, Alabama

English Department Head
1981-present

School Leadership Team
1989-present

National Writing Project Experience

1982, Fellow of the Sunbelt Writing Project at Auburn University.

1983 and 1986 Fellow of the American/Swedish Writing Institute in Gothenberg, Sweden

1988 and 1989, co-director of the Sunbelt Writing Project, Auburn University

1990-1991, co-director of the Samford University Writing Project, Birmingham, Alabama

1987-1990, National Writing Project Advisory Board

Professional Activities at the National Level

1986: Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, Planning Group for a national standards board for teaching.

1987-present: Member, Board of Directors National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

NCTE Standing Committees: Committee on Teacher Preparation

Committee on Peer-Assessment
Laison with the NBPTS

1989-1990: Chair, Promising Young Authors Advisory Committee

Professional Activities at the State Level

1987-present: Board of Directors, Alabama Council of Teachers of English.
1990-1992: President, ACTE
Conference Chair of "The Renaissance Child," 1988; "Literacy for All," 1989.

Professional Publications

"Scott's Gift," English Journal, March 1989.

"Navigating English Waters: The Value of the Learning Log," Alabama English, Spring, 1989.

National Recognition

Selected as one of thirty national teachers for the 1990 "Disney Salute to the American Teacher."

Carol Dean

3545 Brookfield Road
Birmingham, Alabama 35226
(205) 823-1536

Riverchase Middle School
853 Willow Oak Drive
Birmingham, Alabama
(205) 988-4975

Sixth Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Riverchase Middle School Pelham, AL	1 year
Oakbrook Middle School Summerville, SC	3 years
Givhans Elementary School Summerville, SC	1 year
Valley Elementary School Pelham, AL	12 years
Montevallo Elementary School Montevallo, AL	4 years
Blue Creek Elementary School Jacksonville, NC	1 1/2 years

Academic Background:

University of Montevallo	M.Ed. 1973
University of Montevallo	B.A. 1969
Postgraduate work	in progress

Professional Organizations and Activities:

National Council of Teachers of English
Alabama Council of Teachers of English
International Reading Association

National Writing Project:

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project 1990
Facilitator, Samford University Writing Project 1991
Presenter, Samford University Writing Project 1991
Presenter/Staff Member, Samford University Young Writers' Camp 1991

Mark Barber

608 19th Court South
Birmingham, Alabama 35205
(205) 322-3508

Homewood Middle School
1108 Frisco Street
Homewood, Alabama 35209
(205) 870-0878

Eighth Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Thompson Elementary School Alabaster, Alabama	4 years
Homewood Middle School Homewood, Alabama	6 years

Academic Background:

University of Montevallo	M.A.	1987
University of Montevallo	B.S.	1981

Professional Organizations and Activities:

Alabama Council of Teachers of English

Honors and Activities:

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project, 1991

Presentations/Publications:

Workshop presenter at ACTE
Conference, 1989

Goal Statement:

Love for words, whether read in literature, heard in music, or expressed in writing, is the essence of the English class. My goal as an English teacher is to inject that love into the hearts and minds of my students. My active participation in writing allows me to identify as teacher/student to the process of writing.

Donna Davis

1826 Jacobs Lane
Vestavia, AL 35216
(205) 979-1740

John E. Bryan School
600 Kimberly Cut-Off Road
Morris, AL 35116
(205) 647-0568

Fifth/Sixth Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Greenwood Jr. High	Three Years
Edgewater Jr. High	Three Years
John E. Bryan Elementary	Seven Years

Academic Background:

University of Alabama in Birmingham	M.A.	1981
University of Alabama in Birmingham	B.S.	1978
Samford University	Post graduate work in progress	

Professional Organizations and Activities:

ADK
NEA
AEA
TEA

Honors and Awards:

Right to Read Project, University of Alabama in Birmingham,1980
Second Mile Teacher Award, Jefferson County Schools, 1990
Samford Writing Project, 1991

Presentations/Publications:

Editor-in-Chief for State of Alabama Church of God Youth News

Goal Statement

My goal in attending the Samford Writing Project is to improve my skills as a teacher of language and writing.

Rebecca B. Dobelstein

3213 Green Valley Road
Birmingham, AL 35243
(205) 967-6667

Hewitt-Trussville Middle School
301 Parkway Drive
Trussville, AL 35173
(205) 655-4718

Seventh Grade English

Teaching Experience:

Hewitt-Trussville Middle School Trussville, Alabama	1 year
Whitwell High School Whitwell, Tennessee	1 1/2 year
North Bullitt High School Shepherdsville, Kentucky	2 years
East Robertson School Cross Plains, Tennessee	1 1/2 years

Academic Background:

Samford University	M.A. in progress
Samford University	B.A. 1974

Professional Organizations and Activities:

National Education Association
Alabama Education Association
Jefferson County Education Association
National Council of Teachers of English
Alabama Council of Teachers of English

Honors and Awards:

Myrtis Kurz English Award, Samford University, 1974
L. E. Barton Award for Excellence in English, Samford University, 1974
Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project, 1991

Goal Statement:

I came to the writing project to learn more about writing workshop as a teaching mode. I think that writing is a fundamental function of language and that writing empowers students as learners. Using writing workshop, I want to create a classroom environment that allows real learning to take place.

Don Garrett

2105 Carraway Street
Birmingham, Alabama 35235
(205)856-2237

Leeds Elementary School
201 Ashville Road
Leeds, Alabama 35094
(205)699-6871

Second Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Leeds Elementary School Leeds, Alabama	2 years
University of Alabama at Birmingham Special Studies Program Birmingham, Alabama	1 year
Jefferson County Board of Education Child Care Program Birmingham, Alabama	2 years

Academic Background:

Auburn University	B.S. 1989

Professional Organizations and Activities

National Education Association
Alabama Education Association
Young Authors' Conference Chairman, Leeds Elementary
Festival of Arts Coordinator, Leeds Elementary
Newspaper Advisor, Leeds Elementary
Drama Coordinator, Leeds Elementary

Honors:

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project 1991

Presentation:

Integrating the Fine Arts With the Language Arts Curriculum

Goal Statement:

It is my desire as an educator that all of my students learn to recognize and appreciate their individual differences and talents and that these gifts may accentuate and build upon their educational foundations and futures.

JoAnne Hoffmann

1364 Willow Creek Place
Alabaster, Alabama 35007
(205) 664-2042

Calera Elementary School
855 10th Street
Calera, Alabama 35040
(205) 668-2848

Fourth Grade Teacher

Teaching Experiences:

Calera Elementary School	1 year
Central Elementary School	5 years
Hewitt Elementary School	6 years
Northwest Elementary School	3 years

Academic Background:

University of Alabama in Birmingham	M.A.	1981
University of South Florida	B.A.	197

Professional Organizations

Shelby County Education Association
Alabama Education Association
National Education Association
Missouri Education Association
Missouri Reading Association
Kappa Delta Pi

Honors and Awards:

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project, 1991
Nominee for Francis Howell Sch. Dist. Teacher of the year

Presentations:

Using Storytelling and the Recording of Nonfiction as a Basis For Writing

Goal Statement:

My goal is to use what I have learned from the Samford Universi
to help motivate and teach my students to not only become better wri
thrill of writing. I plan to develop a successful and rewarding writi
classroom which will offer the average, as well as the disadvantaged
opportunity to convey their thoughts through the printed words.

Karen Jeane

510 Twin Branch Drive
Vestavia Hills, Alabama 35226
(205) 979-8790

Vestavia Hills High School
2235 Lime Rock Road
Vestavia Hills, Al. 35216
(205) 823-4044

Senior English Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Vestavia Hills High School	1 year
Opelika High School	9 years
Scott Preparatory School	6 years
Paulding County Jr. High School	2 years
Morganza High School	1/2 year
Fulton High School	3 1/2 years

Academic Background:

University of Georgia	M.Ed.	1968
University of Georgia	AB	1963

Professional Organizations and Activities:

Phi Delta Kappa
Delta Kappa Gamma
Alpha Delta Kappa
NCTE
ACTE
NEA
AEA
VHEA

Honors and Awards:

Phi Beta Kappa
Phi Kappa Phi
NEH Fellowship, Literary Criticism Institute, Auburn University, 1987
Samford Writing Project, 1991

Presentations/Publications:

Presentations for Alabama Private School Association
Presentations for Opelika City Schools
Presentations for Auburn University Inservice Center

Presentation for Vestavia Hills School System
Presentation for Montevallo Inservice Center
Article published in: Carolina Journal of Educational Research,
Fall, 1981.

Goal Statement:

My goal in attending the Samford Writing Project is to increase my knowledge of the theory behind and the methods for the successful teaching of writing. I wish, also, to improve my own writing skills so that I might model good writing habits for my students and experience the joy of writing personally. Finally, I want to bring a contagious enthusiasm for writing to my classroom.

Lynne J. King

3266 Tyrol Lane
Birmingham, Alabama 35216
(205) 822-2167

Pizitz Middle School
2020 Pizitz Drive
Vestavia, AL 35216

Seventh Grade English

Teaching Experience:

Vestavia Hills High School Vestavia Hills, AL	1 semester
Pizitz Middle School Vestavia Hills, AL	6 years

Academic Background:

Mississippi State University	B.S.	1969

Presentations:

In-service Presentation on Writing Workshop

Goal Statement:

Through the use of writing in my classroom I want to motivate my students to examine and give thoughtful responses to the world around them. I want my students to formulate their own ideas, rather than simply having them determined by their surroundings. I want to enable students to be responders, not sponges.

Robin Leberte

405 Shenandoah Drive
Birmingham, Alabama 35226
(205) 979-2958

Leeds Elementary School
201 Ashville Road
Leeds, Alabama 35094
(205)699-6871

Second Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Leeds Elementary	One Year
Cahaba Heights Elementary	One Year
Bessemer Academy	Two Years

Academic Background:

University of Alabama in Birmingham	M.A. in progress	
University of Alabama in Birmingham	B.S.	1987
Walker College	A.A.	1985

Honors and Awards:

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project 1991

Goal Statement:

I hope to help my students become lifelong learners, thinkers and writers.

Lisa Pemberton

5548 Parkview Circle
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 980-0378

Oak Mountain Elementary
5640 Cahaba Valley Road
Birmingham, AL 35242
(205) 980-1760

Second Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Oak Mountain Elementary Birmingham, AL	1 year, 2nd grade
East Ridge Junior High Chattanooga, TN	2 years, 8th grade reading and English
East Ridge Junior and Senior High Chattanooga, TN	1 year, grades 6-12 Gifted consultant
McBrien Elementary Chattanooga, TN	1/2 year, 5th grade
Montevallo Elementary Montevallo, AL	6 1/2 years, 3rd grade

Academic Background:

University of Montevallo	M.S. 1980
University of Tennessee, Knoxville	B.S. 1976
University of Tennessee, Chattanooga	(post-graduate study in special education)

Professional Organizations and Activities:

Central Reading Council
National Council for Teachers of English
Alabama Council of Teachers of English
NEA AEA SCEA

Honors and Awards:

Samford Writing Project, 1991
Tennessee Governor's School for Teachers of Writing, 1989
Jr. League of Chattanooga, "Grant in Education" award for Writing Lab, 1989

Presentations/Publications:

Presentation at the Tennessee Education in Computers Conference in Nashville, 1990
Inservice presentation on intergration of reading, English, and computers, 1989

Goal Statement:

The Samford Writing Project offers me the opportunity to improve my own personal writing, to become a learner once again so that I can better understand learning in my classroom, and to work for changes in the educational system which will allow students at all levels to use writing to think and to grow.

Cynthia Robicheaux

8423 Enterprise Ave. NE
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35406
(205) 345-2877

Woodland Forrest Elementary School
6001 Hargrove Road East
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35405

Gifted and Talented Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Baton Rouge Middle School	3 years
Kingston County Elementary	1 year
Woodland Forrest Elementary	7 years

Academic Background:

Louisiana State University	B.S.	1971
University of Alabama	M.A.	1985

Professional Organizations and Activities:

Board of Directors, Tuscaloosa Children's Theater
President, Central West High School PTA
Alpha Delta Kappa

Honors and Awards:

First Place, Excellence in Teaching Economics, 1987
Alabama Odyssey of the Mind, 1984-91
- First Place, Regional Competition, 1987
- First Place, Regional Competition, 1989
- First Place, State Competition, 1989
- Primary Team Winner, 1990

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project, 1991

Goal Statement:

My goal is to model the philosophy of the Writer's Workshop in my classroom . I believe that through the writing process students can gain ownership of their own learning.

Marilyn Self

Post Office Box 603
Columbiana, Alabama 35051
(205) 669-7595

Elvin Hill Elementary School
210 Washington Street
Columbiana, Alabama 35051
(205) 669-7165

Third Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Elvin Hill Elementary School	2 years
Columbiana Baptist Kindergarten	6 years
Guntersville Elementary School	3 years
Smith's Station Elementary School	1 year
Westley Heights Elementary	1 year

Academic Background:

Auburn University	B.S.	1974
University of Montevallo	M.Ed.	in progress

Professional Organizations and Activities:

NEA
AEA

Honors and Awards:

Beeson Fellow, Samford Writing Project, 1991

Presentations/Publications:

Presentation : Storytelling, The University of Montevallo
Presentation : Storytelling,Thompson Elementary School
Presentation : Homework Without Tears, Elvin Hill Elementary 1989 and 1990
Presentation : Story Teller, The University of Montevallo, Young Author's Conference 1990 and 1991
Story :"Underwater", published by WaterMark, Inc. in: Children's Hour

Goal Statement:

My goal as a teacher is to take myself out of the classroom and make room for the new and improved me, the me that knows that children learn as they do. My goal is to replace a dispenser of unnecessary knowledge with a cheerful tour guide who answers questions, points out interesting sights, and stands back to watch as eager children learn.

My personal goal is to continue growing and learning each day. I plan to read more, to write more, and listen to a new idea each day. No more ruts for me!

Julie Stipe

412 Old Dearing Road
Helena, Alabama 35080
(205) 663-5773

Academic Background:

Samford University B.S. 1991

Professional Organizations:

Kappa Delta Pi
Kappa Delta Epsilon

Honors and Awards:

Samford University Writing Project, 1991

Goal Statement:

First and foremost, I believe that writing is teachable. Since I hold a philosophy that allows students to be creative and constructive thinkers, my goal in attending the Samford University Writing Project is to extend my knowledge of using the writing process in my classroom. I also hope to become a better writer myself, so that I can be a good model for my students.

JoAnn Trenary
101 Whitecap Circle
Alabaster, Alabama 35007
(205) 663-7850

Riverchase Middle School
853 Willow Oak Drive
Birmingham, AL
(205) 988-4975

Sixth/Eigth Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience:

Deerfield Beach Elementary School Deerfield Beach, FLA	1 year
Lee Elementary School Oklahoma City, OK	1 year
Truman Elementary School Oklahoma City, OK	2 years
West Nichols Hills Elementary School Oklahoma City, OK	5 years
Crestline Elementary School Mountain Brook, AL	1 year
Valley Elementary School Pelham, AL	9 years
Riverchase Middle School Pelham, AL	3 years

Related Experiences:

Editor with Economy Educational Publishers	3 years

Academic Background:

University of Kansas	4 years
Florida Atlantic University	B.A.
Oklahoma City University	M.A.T.
University of Montevallo	Administration Certification

Professional Organizations and Activities:

National Education Association
Alabama Education Association
Shelby County Education Association
Alabama Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of English
Delta Kappa Gamma Educational Sorority
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Honors:

Valley Elementary Teacher of the Year
Shelby County Teacher of the Year to Jefferson State College
Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project 1991

Goal Statement:

After what I have experienced this summer with the Writing Project, I feel better equipped to provide stimulating reading and writing experiences in my classroom. My goals for my students involving reading, writing, and decision-making skills have not changed, but my methods of accomplishing achievement of these goals have. I will not only use my new-found knowledge in my classroom, but, in the future, I hope to have some impact on major changes in the over-all picture of education.

Laurie Watson

3974 Christopher Drive
Birmingham, Alabama 35243
(205) 967-7755

Vestavia Hills Elementary - Central
1289 Montgomery Highway
Vestavia Hills, Alabama 35216
(205) 823-7785

Fourth Grade Teacher

Teaching Experience :

Vestavia Hills Elementary - Central	1.5 years

Academic Background :

University of Alabama - Birmingham	M.A. in progress
University of Alabama - Birmingham	B.S. 1989
Auburn University	B.S. 1982

Professional Organization and Activities :

National Education Association
Alabama Education Association
Vestavia Hills Education Association
Alabama Council of Teachers of English
Over the Mountain Reading Council

Honors :

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project 1991

Goal Statement :

My goal in attending the Samford University Writing Project is to become more comfortable with my own written communication skills. Having this personal knowledge will allow me to transfer my enthusiasm and convictions to the classroom. I hope that my teaching will reflect the importance of writing. Writing is an essential craft which each of us must foster and nurture, so that our students will experience success.

II. GUEST SPEAKERS

Richard L. Graves

Auburn University
Auburn, Alabama

Teaching Experience:

Auburn University	1965-present
FSU	1963-65
Hillsborough County	1957-63

Academic Background:

Florida State University	Ph.D. 1967
University of Florida	M.Ed. 1960
Baylor University	B.A. 1956

Professional Organizations:

NCTE
ACTE
CCCC
SCETC

Honors and Awards:

Outstanding Teacher	1960

Publications and Presentations (Related to research and writing):

Rhetoric and Composition: A Sourcebook for Teachers and Writers. Boynton/Cook, Third Edition, 1960.
Articles in: English Journal, CCC, Language Arts, Kappan

Summary of Presentation:

Richard Graves presented the works of a variety of authors and poets who related in their writings their own experiences with rivers. He captivated us with his own experiences with rivers throughout his life and then asked us to reach into our memories and write about our own. Many were amazed that using the reflective attitude modeled by Dr. Graves, we were able to discover river relationships we didn't know existed.

Gwen J. McCorquodale

2484 Altadena Road
Birmingham, AL 35243
(205) 979-8758

Vestavia Hills Elementary East
2109 Tyson Drive
(205) 823-4900

Third Grade Teacher

Teaching experience:

Vestavia Hills Elementary East Vestavia Hills, AL	3 years
Buena Vista Middle School Nashville, TN	1 year
Sullins Academy Bristol, VA	1 year
Tinsley Elementary Macon, GA	1 year
Alexander Magnet School Macon, GA	1 year
Lakeside Baptist Kindergarten Birmingham, AL	3 years
Joe M. Gilmore School Jackson, AL	1 year
Jackson Academy Jackson, AL	3 years
Goins Elementary Tuscaloosa, AL	1 year

Academic Background:

University of Alabama in Birmingham	M.A. in progress
Mercer University	1984
University of Montevallo	1978
Mobile College	B.S. 1970

Professional Organizations and Activities:

Vestavia Hills Education Association
Alabama Education Association
National Education Association
Over the Mountain Reading Council

Honors and Awards:

Beeson Fellow, Samford University Writing Project 1990
Invitational Education Award 1990

Presentations:

In-service Training on Whole Language

Presentation Summary:

In her presentation "Cutting the Apron Strings", Gwen describes how she broke from the traditional text-based instruction. She uses the teaching of writing to encourage students to communicate their own special thoughts and their views of the world. She read the book Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge by Mem Fox as an introduction to personal narrative from the perspective of memories.

GUEST SPEAKER RESUME

Name: Gloria Solomon

Job Title: Principal

Place and Address of Employment: Pinson Elementary
(Jefferson Co. Schools)
4200 School Drive
Pinson, AL 35126

Teaching Experience:

Principal	Pinson Elementary	K-4
Principal	Hewitt Elementary	K-5
Principal	Hillview School	K-6
Principal	Shades Mountain Elementary	K-6
Teacher	Grades 1-8	1971-1979

Academic Background:

Post-doctoral Work, Peabody
Post-doctoral Work, Harvard
Post-doctoral Work, Columbia
Ed.S., University of Alabama
M.A., University of Alabama
B. S., Samford

Professional Organization:

President of Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators 1990-91
Secretary of Women Educators' Network 1989-91
Phi Delta Kappa

Honors and Awards:

Selected Outstanding Principal by Jefferson County Council of P.T.A.s, 1990
Nominee for Distinguished Alabama Principal-Alabama Association of Elementary School Administration, 1989-90
Golden Apple Award- Outstanding Administrator, Samford University, 1989
Outstanding Academic Achievement and Service Award, University of Alabama, Department of Education Leadership, 1985

Publications/Presentations: (Related to research and writing)

Wingspan, "Collegial Assistance," 1983
Principal Magazine - Three articles
Alabama English - Two Articles
Northwest Quarterly Journal - Two articles
Harvard University Principal's Center Newsletter, 1985
Kappa Delta Pi - The Record, 1975

Presentation Summary:

Dr. Solomon discussed her belief in writing and its value for learners. She documented her success in instituting writing programs in schools where she has been principal. She discussed the importance of administrative support, but asked that we consider the influence that even one person who believes in writing can have on a school as we return to our classrooms.

III. GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

RESPONSE GROUPS

Group 1: Becky, JoAnn T., Lisa, Robin, and Peggy

Group 2: Cindy, Laurie, Mark, and Dave

Group 3: Donna, Karen, Marilyn, and Carol

Group 4: Don, JoAnne H., Lynne, and Julie

COMMITTEES

Food: JoAnne H. and Karen

Daily Log: Julie

Administrative Visits: Mark, Lynne, and Laurie

Publications: JoAnn T., Becky, Carol,and Marilyn

Scrapbook: Donna, Cindy, and Robin

Publicity: Lisa and Don

IV. DAILY LOG

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
JULY 8, 1991

THE BEGINNING

The group assembled in room 124 around 8:15 a.m. Everyone seemed a little apprehensive. It felt a little like the first day of school. Lisa brought some delicious muffins which we ate as we became reaquainted with each other. We chatted until 8:45 when we were welcomed warmly by Dean Julian Prince, the dean of the School of Education.

At our seats we were greeted by several intriguing books about writing. We were given The Bedford Bibliography for Teachers of Writing by Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, Rhetoric and Composition by Richard L. Graves and Sharing and Responding by Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff.

Our first activity of the morning was to read our introductions of one another. I think everyone enjoyed hearing some interesting facts to go along with the names and faces of our new colleagues.

After our introductions, Peggy led us in a discussion of how introductions can be used in the classroom. Several members of the group shared some great ideas such as taped interviews, "people puzzles," name games, and "Everyone has a Story" displays. I can see how valuable hearing helpful hints from other professionals is going to be!

Later, Dave gave us a few questions to initiate journal writing. "Why do people write?," "What do people do when they write?, "How do people learn to write?," and "What is your view of an English teacher?," gave us plenty of inspiration to write in our journals along with a lively group discussion as a follow-up.

We then organized task committees to handle various responsibilities. The task groups are as follows:

FOOD: Jo Anne and Karen

DAILY LOG: Julie

ADMINISTRATORS' VISITATION: Mark, Lynn and Laurie

PUBLICATIONS: Jo Ann, Becky and Marilyn

SCRAPBOOK: Donna, Cindy and Robin

PUBLICITY: Lisa and Don

When we returned from our short break, we received a kind welcome from Dr. Janice Lassiter, the Chairperson of the Department of English. After

which, Dave gave a very informative presentation based on Maxine Hairston's, The Winds of Change. We followed the presentation with a group discussion. We then dismissed for lunch. Lisa was kind enough to bring a nice lunch for us!

After our lunch break, we went to the Computer Lab where we composed poems on the Macintosh Computers. Everyone seemed to catch on pretty fast to the wonders of word-processing. We spent the rest of the afternoon investigating the capabilities of our new tool. Time flew by, and we wrapped up the day around 3:40. Our homework assignment was to read Sharing and Responding and write a one page response to it.

Robin

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
July 9, 1991

I should have known this would be a day of delightful surprises when I glimpsed those heavenly orange rolls beside the coffee pot. Orange rolls are a major weakness for me,and Karen Jeane must have known. The day was off to a great start.

As we finished our morning sugar and caffeine, we had our second surprise--a new friend. Carol Dean joined us as a veteran of last year's project group. Those of us on the anthology committee were especially glad to hear that she will be sharing the wisdom of the past with this year's committees.

After brief announcements concerning parking, bills, and behavior in the computer room, we were off and running for the day. The day began with our journals. Today's journal task was to freewrite, make a topic list, and write a brief writer's autobiography. (I should be through by tomorrow!)

We were hard at work journaling when today's guest joined us. Peggy introduced Dick Graves from Auburn University and the Sun Belt Writing Project. I was excited about hearing him today.

Robin read the daily log from yesterday, and then we moved into committees. Today was the first meeting of these groups, and we were all aware of overwhelming tasks ahead. Somehow as we met, the tasks seemed manageable--there is comfort in groups!

At 9:50 committees reported back to the group. The food group went first (priority!) and immediately went to work enlisting volunteers for morning snacks. Pot-luck on Thursdays will be done by response groups. The committee on visitors asked that cards be turned in by tomorrow with names and contact info of administrators we would like to invite. Publicity asked for help from any of us who have special contacts with the media. They want to make us widely known. Julie's daily log list was filled, and the scrapbook committee went to work snapping pictures. (Smile at all times!) Publications will have formats and instructions for our contributions in a day or two.

Dick Graves, in his presentation on personal writing, led us on a trek through our minds to the rivers of our past. As I wrote,I felt my mind give way to the peaceful surroundings hidden in my memory. I think the river water refreshed many of us. Others, the self-avowed city folk, got their feet wet in a whole new way. No one got lost in the rapids, and as we shared our writing we discovered that the rivers had yielded real

treasure.

All this before lunch--I couldn't believe it!

At 1:15 we reconvened. First on the afternoon agenda was response to Dr. Graves. Then, the moment we had all be waiting for, we drew response group assignments. Peggy led us as we discussed the reading we had done last night in Sharing and Responding by Elbow and Belanoff. The idea of descriptive response instead of value judgments helped alleviate a bit of anxiety as we moved to meet with our groups.

Group 1: Becky, JoAnn T., Lisa, Robin, and Peggy

Group 2: Cindy, Laurie, Mark, and David

Group 3: Donna, Karen, Marilyn, and Carol

Group 4: Don, JoAnne H., Lynn, and Julie.

Just before 4:00 we wound things up for the day. It's almost time to head home. I'm still in one piece. I didn't get eaten in a response group or swallowed up by the task of my committee. I'm still excited, but I must admit that just for a moment I might consider a quick trip to the nearest river.

Becky J.

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
July 10, 1991

Pound cake, cheese and crackers, what a way to start the day! I can tell you exactly where that pound cake went, too. It added its pound to my bathroom scale. Thanks to Jo Anne Hoffman for the delicious goodies.

Our attention was immediately called to a new, colorful display. Peggy was decorating the back wall with construction paper balloons garnished with our first computer efforts. Each balloon had the acrosstix poem and a photograph of the author. Peggy busily used a roll a film in our first meetings and these pictures were the results. Peggy, where are the rest of Donna and Mark? It's a wonderful, eye-catching format to show off our poetry.

About 8:30 Peggy casually said,"You know what to do." And we did. Journal writing is becoming easier as the days are moving on. The experience has become a real discovery time for me. I am touching on some painful subjects that I didn't know I had thought of for many years.

Peggy brought her computer and set it up in our classroom. This should be very useful, especially for committee use. David also suggested we set up a collaborative writing file on this computer. Have any thoughts or ideas about us? Add it to our piece.

After our committees met for approximately an hour, about 10:15 we gathered to listen to Carol Dean's presentation on "Writing to Learn". Carol took the group on a historical journey; first to the Persian Gulf conflict and then, further back, to the Revolutionary War period. "Listen my children, and you shall hear." Jean Fritz's <u>And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?</u> was an excellent literary springboard into writing historical journals. Before lunch we had time to respond to Carol's demonstration by writing her letters.

At 1:15 we met in Chapman Hall computer room for an afternoon of composing. David reminded us that Monday we would be sharing in our response groups. We will need to have a draft ready .

David closed the afternoon by letting us know we could use the computer room after class hours. He fielded questions from the group and we continued composing until 4:00. Day three has ended and you know, I'm not as tired as I was at the close of Day one or Day two. Maybe I'm getting used to this.

Laurie Watson

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
JULY 11, 1991

It's Thursday!! The sun is shining, birds are singing and our group has made it to the end of our first week.

As we walked into the classroom, the smell of fresh delectable pastries, provided by Cindy Robicheaux, and the aroma of fresh brewed coffee tempted our bodies into action. Ready for action is what we were too! Dressed in our Sunday best (Boy does this group clean up good!), heady with the power of success and a whiff of the weekend just over the horizon, we settled in for a full morning's work.

Journal writing started our work day. Peggy asked us to include in our entries for today a reflection of our first week's experiences, thoughts and ideas. Journal writing has become a wonderful release. We can write our deepest and most personal comments without being concerned about receiving unwanted remarks.

Yesterday's plane crash and the news of the death of Gary and Maryanne Manning's son seemed to be a part of everyone's thoughts. It wasn't sadness that seemed to grip us, as much as the realization that a tragedy such as this could happen any place at any time. Even in our town.

At 9:00 a.m., Dave Roberts began his presentation of Patrick Hartwell's article, "Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar," after which my immediate reaction was to rush right out and trash our English book! Anyone up for a good bonfire?

Picture time came and our group, in all of its finery, assembled outside for our illustrious, commemorative photo. Other shots were taken by districts to use for publicity purposes in the different geographic areas.

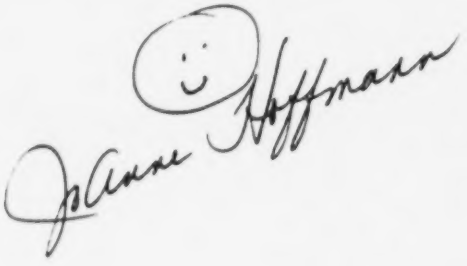
Pictures were followed by a presentation by Peggy Swoger on Reading Logs. She referred us to articles by Nancy Atwell and Ann Berthoff, then proceeded to lead us in an exercise of using the double entry journal method. I must say that I became very intrigued and impressed with the concept of establishing more of a colleague relationship between student and teacher. This could just be the key!

Next on the agenda was lunch at the Rotunda Club. About 12:15 we converged on the Club and dined in style on soup, salad and an array of possible sandwich combinations. The Club's staff may not have known what hit them by our presence, but soon rose to the challenge, and we left full as ticks looking for a nice shade tree to crawl under to take a good nap. We resisted that urge, and moved on to the computer lab for an afternoon of composing. Many of us took this opportunity to discuss plans for our presentation with Peggy.

My friends, we have made it through the first week! Now it's time for some rest, relaxation and socializing. Our first Pot Luck Dinner was sponsored by Response Group # 4 and held at Don Garrett's home. We dined on spaghetti, salad, garlic bread, and the best cheese cake I have ever put in my mouth! (Thank goodness for Sam's!)

Good work, good friends and good food...

Who could ask for anything more!!



SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
JULY 15, 1991

It's Monday again, and a long week looms before us, but after a three day weekend, I am somewhat anxious to get back to work. (I guess I must be a little crazy.) As usual, we all gathered around the side counter to feast upon the goodies brought today by Robin. Peggy informed us of the week's activities and reminded each of us that we should be working on our demonstrations. (Cindy -- you must be very brave to volunteer to be first.)

Dean Roderick Davis was then introduced by Dave. (Maybe I should call him Dr. Roberts.) It is encouraging to know that administrators do believe in the value of our work. Before Dean Davis was able to leave, Dave let us in on a secret -- it was the Dean's and Donna's birthday -- so we sang "Happy Birthday." (It's a good thing nobody was listening outside the door.)

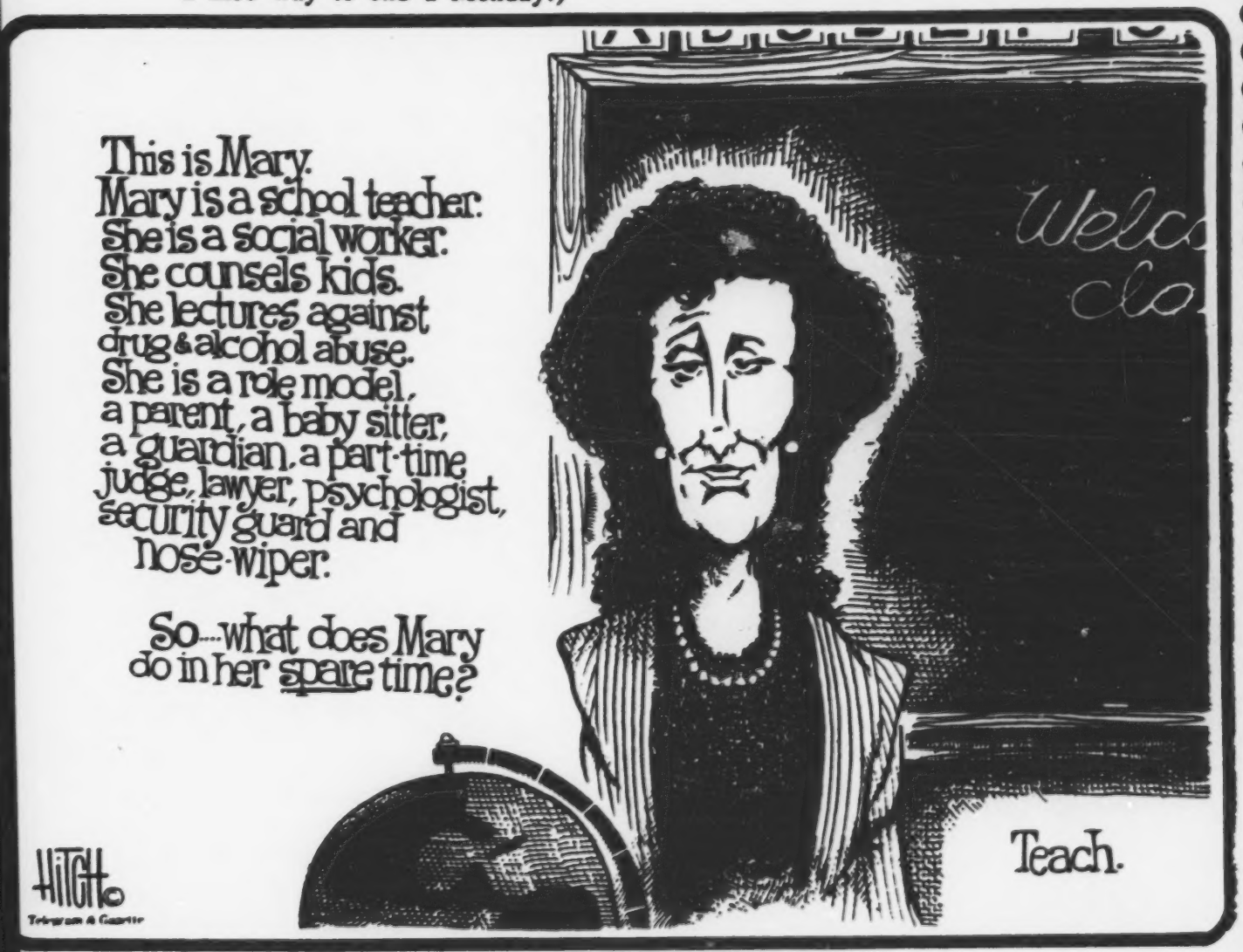
At 8:30 Peggy said the now infamous words, "You know what to do," and we began journal writing. For some reason, journal writing was a little easier today. (Maybe because of the time I had this weekend to think about last week's activities.)

At 9:00 JoAnne read last Thursday's journal, then Carol used this to lead into a discussion about our concerns and issues in the classroom. She added several issues to the list generated during orientation, all of which we hope to cover during the next four weeks. After our group discussion, we had a break for a few minutes. (Once again everyone gathered around the food, and little discussions broke out in different parts of the room -- I can tell these issues will be a favorite part of the project.)

Gwen McCorquodale's demonstration was next on the agenda so we regrouped around 10:30. Gwen entitled her presentation "Cutting the Apron Strings." (What an appropriate title for what we are trying to accomplish.) Gwen focused on the importance of writing as a means for building student self-esteem, which is her reason for having a philosophy which incorporates writing into the classroom. Peggy captured the essence of Gwen's presentation when she said, "We know why we are teachers."

After breaking for lunch, we gathered back to write responses to Gwen. Dave reminded us of Dean Prince's overwhelming support of the Writing Project.(How can we forget? -- He is a major reason the project is alive and prospering today.) Several people suggested that we invite him down to lead us in a morning song. (I only hope we are a little more on key when he joins us than we were today.) Peggy asked us to contact our state legislators to indicate our support for a writing project bill which lost its momentum last week.

We spent the rest of the day working in our response groups. (What a nice way to end a Monday!)


This is Mary.
Mary is a school teacher.
She is a social worker.
She counsels kids.
She lectures against drug & alcohol abuse.
She is a role model, a parent, a baby sitter, a guardian, a part-time judge, lawyer, psychologist, security guard and nose-wiper.
So....what does Mary do in her spare time?
Teach.
HITCH

Samford University Writing Project
Daily Log
July 16, 1991

It think it will be some time before we all fully digest what is taking place in each one of our lives this summer. I think we would all agree that what is happening is life changing, not only for us, but for all those precious lives we will in turn be able to affect. Our days continue to begin and end with challenges, encouragements and non stop stimulation, and today was certainly no exception.

This morning Dr. Hull greeted us with words of encouragement and motivation that clearly set a wonderful mood for the day. His parting statement left a challenge for all of us who cherish words. "If we misuse words", Dr. Hull explained, "then we debase the currency of academic life." Where has Samford found all these wonderful people?

Following this great beginning, we filled out a Response Group Survey while David collected his monies for last week's lunch at The Rotunda Club. Visions of Shakespeare's Shylock appeared in my mind as he stacked his duckets on the table with an ever widening grin.

Julie read yesterday's log reminding us, with her closing cartoon, of what lay ahead in the fall - reality. Gee, thanks Julie.

Peggy discussed the urgent need for all of us to support continued funding of The Writing Project by personally calling our legislators. We all should share a more than vested interest in seeing these projects survive and more so, to see them thrive.

Shared reading was our next activity but with one added surprise. Dean Prince dropped in, but by now, our confidence is soaring so we were undaunted by this visit . Besides, I think we are starting to enjoy our guests and look forward to sharing our writing with them. If the pieces we heard this morning are any indication of the abilities of this group, we should be sending out invitations. I observed Dean Prince closing his eyes and listening intently, and I realized that his sincere interest and commitment to what we are doing is the reason that The Samford Writing Project will never die.

After our break, Gloria Solomon joined us as our guest speaker. We began by sharing with her our individual reasons for wanting to be a part of The Project. It was interesting to hear everyone's story and the many influences that brought us together. It was almost like listening to stories about our love life only the romance revolved around a lover named Writing. Mrs. Solomon told us how she fell in love with

writing on a personal basis, and how she then took that love into the classroom. As a principal, she now supports and encourages a lot of writing in her school. What a person to have on our side! Her parting thought for us was that we consider the impact we are having in our individual schools and how that influence might never have existed if we had not been there, and it may never exist again when we leave . I think those words should make us all return to our schools with a renewed commitment.

We broke for lunch, more starved than ever, since my banana bread failed to win a blue ribbon. I blame this on Mrs. Crocker's article entitled "Banana, Bananas, and the Making of Banana Bread," for in this article, she stressed the"self rising" approach over the"enriched flour" theory. This obviously is outdated and we know now that it only leads to banana bread that is flat and tasteless.

We spent the afternoon working on the computers and entangled once more in our ongoing affair with words. If my wife only knew.

Samford University Writing Project
Daily Log
July 17, 1991

Streaking through the universe faster than the speed of light, our hero, Scripto, prepared for his mission. Knowing that a landing on Earth could be hazardous to his health, he checked the contents of the on-board First Aid Kit. Confirming the contents of the kit, Scripto secured the kit to his survival belt and moved on down his mission check list.

A tiny recording device was attached to the courageous voyager's Earthsuit. This device is capable of recording both audio and video input. The microscopic instrument could also record atmospheric pressure, temperature, and the amount of caffeine-free liquid located in a given space.

Scripto knew that life on Zadar depended upon the findings of his mission. Back at home millions of Zadarian children's imaginations and creative abilities were being stifled as the Education Robots tried to force each child into pre-programed molds. Entire classrooms were becoming silent where once the walls resounded with the happy exchanges of eager learners.

Strapped into his landing pod, Scripto tried to relax as he waited for the tumbling sensation that would signal his entry into Earth's atmosphere. Concentrating on nis mission, Scripto closed his sensors and waited patiently, conserving his energy for all that lay ahead.

Meanwhile, in a quiet corner of the Earth, surrounded by the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, nestled a beacon of educational enlightenment, Samford University. The Earth date was July 17, 1991 and the Earth time was 8:15 a.m..

The parking lots of the University were filling with cars as the students eagerly entered the halls of learning. One group of students seemed to be especially excited. They were the teachers involved with Samford's Impact '91, the Writing Project.

Back in space, Scripto began to feel the increased pull of the Earth's gravity as his pod fell to the surface of the Earth. The impact of Scripto's pod was so slight that the Samford student upon whom he landed had no indication that she was having a close encounter with Scripto of Zadar.

Upon landing, Scripto flew into action, sensors open, atmospheric regulators on, jet pack in place, gravity neutralizer neutralizing. Scripto of Zadar was ready to carry out his mission. He pressed the play button on the small recorder and listened once again to the careful directions of his leader.

Marilyn Self, the student Scripto landed on, was busy providing goodies for her classmates. Scripto switched on his jet pack and lifted off to begin exploration. He soared over mountains of Strawberry Bread, Lemon Bread, Banana Bread, fruit, and large amounts of decaffeinated liquid. His sensors were working!

The room in which Scripto found himself was a bright one. As the room filled with earthlings, his sensors and recording instrument indicated happy conversation and mutual sharing of ideas. Some earthlings complained of exhaustion and then went on to say that they had never enjoyed working so hard.

As Scripto slipped between earthlings Carol and Donna, he felt a change in the room. The happy chatting earthlings had all settled into chairs and picked up paper and pen. Now the only sounds were the scratching of pen on paper. Fortunately for Scripto, Peggy was using her lap top. The spelling warning signal was almost identical to the sound made when Scripto's writing alarm went off. Peggy helped to keep Scripto an invisible undetected member of the class.

The thirty minute trip through Journal Land helped Scripto recognize the importance of journals to the children of Zadar. A birthing place for ideas, Scripto recorded in his own journal.

Earthling Peggy seemed to be the leader of the group. At the end of journal writing, she stood and led the group in a short discussion. Scripto wondered why a principal who supported writing in schools would have anything to fear from higher ups? Why would teachers who love to teach writing feel deserted when a supportive principal moves?

writing in schools would have anything to fear from higher ups? Why would teachers who love to teach writing feel deserted when a supportive principal moves?

The discussion was over before Scripto was ready. Peggy said "Committiees," and the room emptied. Scripto began to explore, crawling through notebook pages and speed reading articles by Peter Elbow, Frank Smith, Dave Roberts, and an interesting little piece called "Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar." Head spinning, Scripto pumped the air line of his Earthsuit. How much could a simple Zadarian take in at one time? "This must be how the earthlings feel," he thought.

A buzz of voices warned Scripto that the class was returning. A new leader had emerged. Scripto decided that the committees had replaced Peggy by vote. He was glad to see that the group had chosen a peaceful overthrow, Peggy was still a part of the group. The new leader, Cindy Robicheaux, announced the topic she intended to address, Creative Problem Solving.

Scripto couldn't believe his good luck! Imagine landing here and finding a room where earthlings were discussing creative classrooms and how to solve problems,too. The reels on his recorder were whirring as Cindy presented a logical method of solving problems. Step one is called "The Mess." That's what we have on Zadar! Step two is "Find The Facts." We can do that! Step three is "Find The Problem." We can even do that! Step four is to "Find The Idea." Even Zadarians can brainstorm. Cindy told the group that "The Solution" was step five, and that step six is "Accepting Findings."

Cindy, confident of her take over of the class, had invited two earthlings that she introduced to the class as her Principal, Shelley Jones, and a Kindergarten Teacher, Jean Gordan. Scripto wondered if they supported writing or if Cindy feared their presence. The joyful way Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Gordan entered into the discussion assured Scripto of their good intentions.

When Cindy ended her presentation, an amazing thing happened. Peggy became the leader again! Scripto felt light-headed. These earthlings change so quickly! Peggy announced that the class would have lunch and move to the computer lab. Now that's something Scripto could work with!

In the lab he learned why this group of earthlings were still in school. Some of them couldn't even get their disk into the machine! Scripto interfaced and sailed from one monitor to the other. He had lots of fun reading the words of the earthlings. This group of dedicated individuals pecked until around four o'clock. They even continued to peck, without shame, when the camera crew and reporter, Barbara Bolding, came to record their efforts. Scripto was impressed at how quickly women of Earth can apply lip color!

After the excitement of cameras and microphones, everyone had to rush home to record the news. It's not every day that a group of writing teachers appear on the news. Scripto wondered if this means that people will begin to love writing? The earthlings loaded their cars for the return trip home. The campus seemed empty.

When Scripto found himself alone, he thought of all the things he had seen and heard. He was inspired and determined to change Zadar for all children. The return trip was just a flash of light through the night sky. Scripto went to work immediately and quickly wrought the changes he so deeply desired, and his work was rewarded. Behold, the typical Zadarian student.....

Marilyn Sey

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
JULY 18, 1991

Our Thursday morning study began with fixins' provided by our Sister Joanne Trenary. At the appointed time, The Reverend Sister Peggy nodded, and we all began our daily meditation.

After the conclusion of our pondering, our Overseer, The Reverend Doctor Martha Rawls, came by to address our group and welcome us to the campus. Afterwards, the group viewed highlights from our most recent T. V. crusade, while The Reverend Sister Peggy handed out our gifts of love-offerings. Later, Sister Marilyn Self provided us with our daily commentary. The balance of the hour we spent in exhorting and admonishing one another.

The revelation hour brought us our morning soul searchin' by Brother Don Garrett. His message made us all want to repent and add music to our daily meditation. Brother Don's Mother Superior, Sister Norma Bumpus, dropped by for Brother Don's oratory. We broke for lunch at noon.

Our assembly at 1:15 allowed us once again the opportunity to exhort and confirm our own Brother Don Garrett's efforts. Subsequently, The Reverend Sister Peggy provided the group with directions for the Thursday night revival meetin'. The crusaders then assembled into response groups to review plans for our future crusades.

The day concluded with our tent meetin' at the Montreat Circle location in Vestavia Hills. Music was provided by Brother Mark and the Samford Harmonetts. Nourishment was prepared by our dedicated Reverend Sister Peggy, and Sisters Lisa, Robin, Becky, Joanne, and Carol. We all left having had our soul and body fed.

Truly this day proved to be rewarding and uplifting, not to mention the fact that the Vestavia' folks really know how to throw-down!

Sister Donna

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SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
JULY 22, 1991

The first day of the third week of "Camp English" began with the usual...food and coffee provided by Lynn King and journal writing. No one even had to remind us...we know why we are here.

Then, Sister Donna read the log to an enthusiastic round of "Amens." The discussion that followed included the group's concerns about how to go forth and share the message of "writing to learn" without offending and alienating our colleagues. The group cited examples from our own personal experiences...how nervous we felt dealing with the abstract concept of teaching "writing" and teaching through writing, fear of losing control in our classrooms if we allow children to "discover" and "experiment" with the language of learning rather than always "instructing," and how to become facilitators of change in the schools by telling our own stories of how we became teachers of writing. We all agreed that there are no easy answers. Perhaps Peggy summed up our feelings best when she said that the quality of education is dependent on the quality of the teacher.

This comment opened up another line of discussion...can everybody teach writing? Peggy cited the authority Mary Kay Heeley who assures us that we can all teach through writing but it may take some of us, and many of our fellow teachers, more time to make the philosophical transition.

The "committees" reported: "Thursday Night Out" is at the Olive Garden at 5pm. Resumes are due on Thursday. Presentation reports are due two or three days after the presentation. Use 12 pt. Times for printing resumes and presentations. Underline headings in resumes and don't underline headings in the presentation reports.

Karen Jeane presented a workshop on "Writing to Learn: Reader Response Criticism". The steps for analyzing the poem, "January Chance," were as follows: 1. making a prediction about the poem using just the title, 2. revising and reaffirming the prediction after reading the first two stanzas, 3. telling what happens in the poem, 4. telling feelings when the poem is read, 5. selecting the single word, passage or image in the text that represented the central moment.

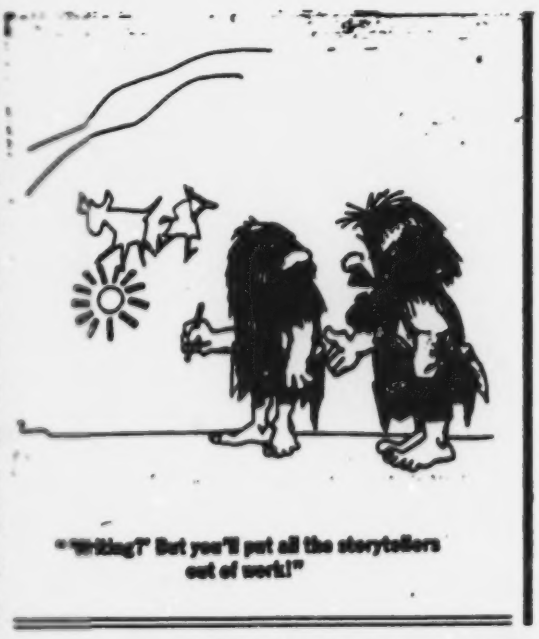
Karen's administrators including Vestavia curriculum coordinators Reba Clark and Alice Laurendeen and principal, Michael Gross joined the writing activities and discussion. All agreed that reading and writing about literature is a good way of learning about the selection as well as yourself. Peggy pointed out that "writing to learn" is less threatening than it seems but that some teachers may complain about the time that writing takes in relation to direct instruction. Reba Clark stated that it has been her belief that we should cover half as much twice as well. She sees her role as curriculum coordinator to provide teachers support for this philosophy and freedom to use writing to accomplish curriculum goals.

After lunch, we worked in the computer lab...no cameras, no lights, just slow deliberate resolve about our purposes...to learn, to grow, and to share.

My apologies to those of you who have come to expect the unexpected from the "Daily Log"...but I'm reminded that there is room for all of us, even the untalented and uninspired, in this process.

Humbly yours,

Lisa Pemberton



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SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
DAILY LOG
JULY 23, 1991

Five-thirty A.M. - Get up and walk. Not today. I'll sleep until the alarm at 6:30.

Six-thirty A.M. - Shower and dress. Get Donald and Matt out the door for their breakfast appointment. Prepare breakfast for myself and my houseguest. Pack my lunch so I can meet Carrie Anna. Put out meat to thaw for dinner. Wake Carey and see if she is feeling better than last night. Confirm her ride to camp.

Seven-fifty A.M. - Leave for Samford. Shift mind to writing and teaching. I wonder if every member of our project is as mentally overloaded as I feel. Found good parking place. Oh, today I do the daily log.

I arrived on time for a change. The room was already filled with quiet discussions about, what else, writing to learn. At the front of the room was an empty aquarium and a bucket of sand. I was curious, but not surprised. Anything is possible and likely with this group. On my way to be seated, I noticed a crock pot and bags of chocolate and butterscotch chips. I was still curious, but pleased at the prospects of a sweet treat.

Don Garrett provided doughnuts for our munching while we wrote in our journals. Journal writing has become a favorite activity for me.

Peggy signaled the end of journal writing by distributing a piece of student writing entitled "The Catch of the Day." Our assignment was on the board: "What grade and comments would you give this advanced English eighth grader who is about to enter ninth?" Peggy instructed us not to compare with our neighbors and to respond with a grade. We all struggled. I overheard the comments, "I can't do this. " "I don't do this." "I have to give some grades." After collecting our "graded" papers, Peggy gave us some background information and showed us the student's earlier draft of the same piece. The responses were varied. Becky and I thought the final product an improvement. Marilyn and JoAnne disagreed. (This points out one of the problems of teachers assigning grades to student writing.) Peggy allowed us to have a short discussion about evaluating and assigning grades, but she stopped us with the promise of, "We'll spend half a day discussing this issue at a later date." I may bring my tape recorder that day.

After Lisa read the previous day's log, we had a time of shared reading. Karen introduced her piece as "obligatory" since she had shared a piece about her son at an earlier session. She then read a

delightful piece about her daughter. Don brought us to tears of laughter with his piece "The Dinner." Lisa read "The Pin." As I heard the story of transformed students, I remembered Peggy's comment, "The quality of education is dependent on the quality of the teacher." Cindy shared her piece about her "couch potato." All of us with teenagers at home identified.

We returned from our mid-morning break to participate in Marilyn Self's demonstration, "Writing in Science." We were joined by Mr. Belue, Marilyn's guest from the Shelby County Board of Education office. Immediately, Marilyn captured our attention with her original story of Molly's first encounter with worms. Then, we proceeded to have our own personal encounter with worms-real, live worms. Marilyn supplied each of us with our own cup of dirt and our own worm. We wrote about worms. We observed worms. We asked questions about worms. We did research about worms. We built a castle for worms. We even cooked and ate "worms"! Third graders must love Mrs. Self's hands-on science classes. We all did!

Our afternoon response groups were shortened in favor of composing time in the computer room. Peggy is modeling flexibility for us. I hope we'll remember to be responsive to our students' needs for schedule changes.

Tomorrow we take our first field trip. We'll spend the day at the botanical garden and the Birmingham zoo. I hope it isn't 100 degrees tomorrow. I hope it doesn't rain. I hope I don't forget to bring my own drink.

Four P.M. - The car is hot! Pick up Carey at camp. Drive home. I'm glad no one is expected at our house tonight except the family.

Five-thirty P.M. - Wake up from unscheduled nap. Hurry to put supper on the table. Have Carey back at camp by 7:00.

Seven-thirty P.M. - Supper finished, kitchen cleaned, Carey delivered. Get to computer to write. Phone rings. More bad health reports from the family. Do my students have so many demands and distractions? I'm sure they do. I must remember.

Lynne King

Samford University Writing Project
Daily Log
July 24, 1991

Gone With The Pen[1]

"Writing writing....all this talk of writing," sighed Peggy Scarlett. "If I hear one more word about writing I won't go to the gardens with either one of you!" Peggy Scarlett was talking to Mark and Don, two southern gentlemen whose conversation centered around the rumor about a group of Yankee teachers and administrators rallying together to abolish the confederate writing process. She couldn't be bothered with all of these rumors now. Her main interest concerned that terribly handsome, but devilish, Captain Dave Rhett Butler Roberts. It seemed that Captain Roberts had ignored Peggy Scarlett's invitation to the gardens in favor of that notorious woman better known as Belle Macintosh SE. "Fiddley dee," cried Peggy Scarlett. "Let him spend all of his time with that little ol' measly computer trash!" "What do I care?"

Peggy Scarlett had plenty to do to keep her mind off of the Captain. She had the huge responsibility of overseeing the Tara University Writing Plantation. As usual, she began the day by instructing all of the servants to begin their daily journals. The only sound that could be heard was the rustling of Mammy Becky's red petticoats as she prepared the morning refreshments. Peggy Scarlett was too preoccupied to eat, even though hunger panged at her body. Mammy Becky led Peggy Scarlett to the food and exclaimed, "Ms. Peggy Scarlett, you's gwana eat and dat's all dey is to it!" Peggy Scarlett took a deep breath and began digging through the mound of food. Clutching a cinnamon roll in one hand and raising it towards the sky she vowed, "As God as my witness I'll never go hungry again!"

After everyone had a chance to record their innermost thoughts they headed for the Botanical Gardens. Miss Melanie JoAnn Trenary was to speak to the servants about a type of poetry from the Far East called Haiku . Miss Mellie JoAnn was every bit a Southern lady and as sweet as the smell of wisteria

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[1]My deepest apologies to Margaret Mitchell.
Mark Twain might have gotten away with it, but I doubt I will!

on a summer's eve. She kept her audience spellbound as she disclosed secrets from the Orient. Ms. Charlotte Lusco, of the Riverchase Elementary Luscos, and Mr. Evan Majors, a coordinator for the confederate cause, seemed especially interested in her oration. After her disclosures, Miss Mellie JoAnn instructed the group to write their own Haiku poetry. Suddenly Prissy Laurie went into hysterics crying, "Oh, Miss Peggy Scarlett, I don't know nothin' 'bout writin' no Haikus!" Peggy Scarlett slapped Prissy Laurie with her Rhetoric and Composition book and told her to remember the cause!

After everyone had a chance to ponder beneath the Magnolia blossoms, they shared their poetry with the group. Peggy Scarlett insisted that she read hers! Later, the group dined on the grounds of the gardens and discussed their plan of attack when the Yankees invaded. Peggy Scarlett warned everyone about the carpetbagger principals who would be coming around with their hands out for all of their treasured confederate writing knowledge. "I'll die before they get anything out of me!" she cried. Miss Marilyn Self eased the group's tension by telling them two stories. The group was captivated by her description of savage Indians and slimy reptiles. Her voice was as lovely and hypnotic as the song of a nightingale. Peggy Scarlett broke the spell however, when she instructed everyone to scratch their own plans of attack into the ground with a stick. As everyone sketched in the dirt, a sudden rumble could be heard in the distance. "Surely it's just thunder," thought Peggy Scarlett, but as the rumble got closer she knew that it was the firing of cannons that she heard. Aunt Pitty Patty Pemberton became frantic. "Yankees! Yankees! I'm having palpitations!" The servants fled to the four corners of the gardens leaving Peggy Scarlett alone under a tree. "What shall I do...what shall I write," cried Peggy Scarlett? "If only Captain Roberts were here." Peggy Scarlett couldn't be bothered with this though. She stood up tall and proclaimed as she looked into the horizon, "Oh well, tomorrow is another day!"

Don

Samford University Writing Project
Daily Log
July 25, 1991

Day Fifteen

It is difficult to believe that our journey toward enlightenment is now three weeks old. Only two weeks left! Will there be time to complete everything?

Our morning began with wonderful goodies provided by Carol Dean. Carol, your energy and devotion to the group are astounding. You must have been up all night cooking quiche, bagels, and an assortment of muffins. Many thanks.

Refreshment time this morning included an additional treat. We were all intrigued as we looked at our artwork which had been produced during Marilyn's lesson on worms and at beautiful photographs of us all which had been taken during various activities over the last few days. It is so obvious that we are all having a wonderful time,and still we are working and learning. You mean students can have a good time and still learn? Amazing!

We settled down to our journal writing time. I must admit that I cheated a little because I kept peeking at my classmates. I could observe my colleagues involved in all aspects of writing. Some were thinking, some writing, some reading over what they had written, some reading source material, some scratching out and rewriting. I was actually witnessing many stages of the writing process being demonstrated simultaneously. I must remember to allow this latitude of activity in my classroom if my students are to be productive.

Peggy brought journal writing to a close by asking us to review our journals to determine how writing in the journal for thirty minutes each day has affected our other writing. We then shared some of our discoveries about journal writing. We agreed that journals should be private, not graded or forced to be shared. Each person's journal is for himself or herself, a safe place to probe, question, discover. Through our journal writing, we have learned to take ourselves seriously as writers and to see the difference between real writing and pretend writing. We strayed into talking about evaluation again, and, once more, Peggy had to hold us at bay, promising a day for discussing only evaluation. It is comforting to me to know that we are all worried about handling this vital issue.

Don entertained us by reading his daily log from yesterday. Personally, I could feel myself being transported to Tara. As God is my witness, I could smell the air,redolent with magnolia and hear the rumbling of the Yankee canons. Frankly, my dear, I was captivated!

During shared reading time, Laurie read her poem "The How Come Boy," an insightful look at what the educational system too often does to an inquisitive young mind. JoAnne Hoffman shared "College - First Look," a personal narrative about her daughter's experience at college orientation. Mark read a personal narrative about his memories of living in Canada and the pain of leaving there. "The Little Creek" told the sensitive story of his process of dealing

with memories and putting them in perspective with the present. Becky read "Grandma's Boxes," a poem written for her father-in-law, and Donna shared "Memory," a moving piece about her sister's death.

Following our reading time, the response group in charge of our graduation party gave us some hints about our celebration. They are planning a luncheon rather than a dinner, and there will be some surprises involved. (I'm not ready to talk about graduation yet. I'm still having such a good time learning, and how I will miss all of these dear new friends!)

Following our break time, Laurie Watson took charge and introduced her principal, Jim Jeffers. We had two other guests with us, and Laurie asked the participants whose guests they were to introduce them. JoAnne Hoffman introduced her principal, Philip Haynie, and Marilyn Self introduced Ann Head, her principal. Laurie's presentation, "Writing in the Math Classroom," was a delightful demonstration of using reading and writing to help fourth grade students learn math. By participating we saw clearly how writing helps students solve problems. (Is this demonstration applicable to me, a teacher of senior-level English? You bet it is. Figuring out a poem's meaning is a problem, isn't it? By writing about the poem, students are able to solve the problem.) As we always do, at the end of the demonstration, we responded to Laurie by writing letters to her about the demonstration.

I wish that all of today's critics of education who picture teachers as non-professional dullards could see the teaching demonstrations in which we have all been privileged to participate. The professionals in this project are extraordinary, and every day I stand a little taller as a result of being associated with this group. What a wonderful profession teaching is!

After lunch our afternoon was split between computer time and sharing with our response groups. Even I have become more comfortable with my friend, Mr. Macintosh, and I can't imagine not meeting regularly with my wonderful response group. Marilyn, Donna, Carol, you may have to get beepers when our sessions end. I need the comfort of knowing I can share with you at any time.

The day ended with the "hospitaliano" of The Olive Garden. We had terrific meals and even better fellowship. The evening was made more special because we got to celebrate Lynn King's birthday with her, cake, candles, singing, clapping, and all.

Ciao, Baby!

Karen Jeane

WRITING PROJECT NEWS

MONDAY, JULY 29, 1991 OUR 2ND YEAR SAMFORD SECTION

NEWS FLASH! VOLCANO ERUPTION AT SAMFORD!

by JoAnn Trenary
News staff writer

BIRMINGHAM--A volcano erupted in room 126 of the Beeson Education Building on the Samford University campus at approximately 10:45 this morning. The eruption occurred after members of the Samford Writing Project had routinely written in their journals and participated in an activity led by the group leader, Peggy Swoger. Peggy had elicited many diverse interpretations of an art piece housed in the Birmingham Museum of Art. Fortunately, Peggy had only pictures of the piece of art, the real one still in the museum, safe from total destruction during the impending volcanic activity. All survivors of the eruption can look forward to seeing and writing about real works of art when they visit the museum on Tuesday of this week. Peggy had prepared her followers for what they would see in the African section of the museum by reading them a story written by a former Project member, Lorraine Isaac. Her experiences while living in Africa were very interesting. Had it been known that these experiences might be the last the group would share before being overtaken by the destructive powers of nature, listeners might have embraced each word as a possible last one.

It is believed that the eruption was the plan of Project participant Donna Davis. Other members should have anticipated her plan when she began her presentation by giving them magical rocks and requesting that they "just see what these rocks will do for you."

Attending the presentation at Donna's request were her principal, Glenda Dodd, and a co-worker, Diane Kendrick. These are the only two who will be unable to accompany the group to the museum tomorrow. They will be missed, but all will remember how they participated in Donna's presentation bravely, until the bitter end.

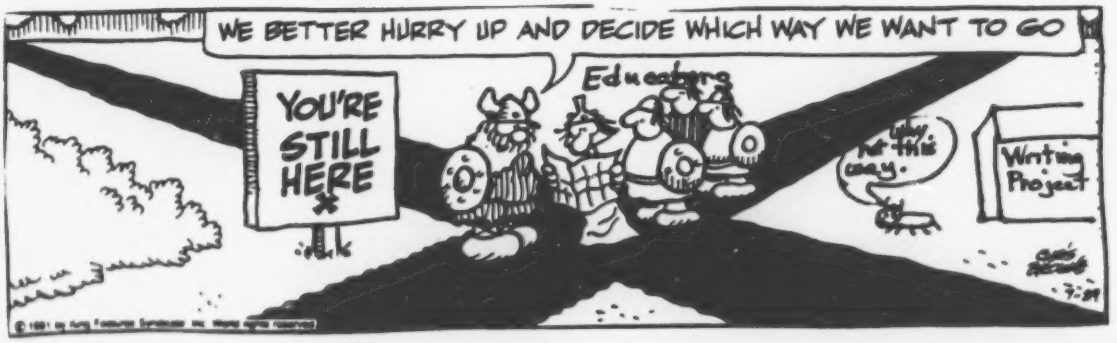
Donna's accomplice in the crime was Lauren Jeane. She helped Donna every step of the way. The group members, not realizing the seriousness with which they should find uses for their magical stones, shared humorous and unusual ideas with the group and then listened to <u>Sylvester and the Magic Pebble</u> as Donna read. Donna's listeners were so captivated by her enthusiastic style that they didn't notice Lauren preparing the volcano for eruption. What a devious conspiracy! Members of the Project interviewed after the disaster expressed concern for those who did not survive and attested to the fact that had the victims listened more carefully to Sylvester's uses of his magic pebble, they would have known how to rely on the magic of the pebbles they were given earlier in the presentation.

Results of the disaster produced an understanding of igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks, as well as the makeup of the earth's crust, glaciers, and how rocks are formed. Survivors were asked to write a story using the information they retained after the eruption. These stories were then shared and found to be an entertaining distraction from the horrible memories of the disaster.

News media reached the scene almost immediately, and the Project committees made their reports.

Later on in the day, Project survivors reflected in their response groups and looked to MacIntosh for guidance. Strengthened by the guidance of both, they continued to prepare resumes, writing pieces, and presentation reports in order to meet next Tuesday's deadline. The entire world commends their bravery and commitment to purpose.

Donna Davis and her accomplice, Lauren Jeane, remain at large, armed with magical pebbles.



Samford University Writing Project
Daily Log
July 30, 1991

ART FROM THE HEART

by Laurie Watson

CHARACTERS

Dave, Writing Project director
Peggy, Writing Project co-director
Donna, provider of the food
JoAnn T., reader of the log
Jo Anne H., presenter of "Writing as Story"
Judy White, special guest, Early Childhood Curriculum Coordinator for Shelby County School System
Ellen Elsas, guide through Museum of Art's African Room
Julie, presenter of "Interior Monologue"
Lynne, Donna, Becky, Mark, Cindy, Don, Marilyn, Robin, Carol, Karen, Laurie, and Lisa, Project participants

SCENE I

Our play opens in Orlean Bullard Beeson Hall, Room 126, the usual meeting place of the Samford University Writing Project. The room teems with excitement as the participants discuss the prospect of two teacher demonstrations and a change in locale for the afternoon.

Lynne. Tell me, Donna, what is your secret for making these delicious pastries and cookies?

Donna. Buy them from Vincent's !

Lynne. No, really, tell me . . .

[The pair fades stage right discussing, in hushed tones, various culinary secrets. All the players are on stage talking and visiting in small groups. As the clock nears 8:30 the groups disperse and the participants settle into their work areas to begin recording in their journals. Most players are writing, but there remain a few hushed conversations. As these conversations die down, the players are all involved in a quiet, thoughtful time. Some pause to think, then continue with reflections in their journals. Journal time closes when Judy White, the special guest comes onstage.]

JoAnn T. Before Jo Anne begins, I'll read yesterday's log.
[JoAnn entertains the group with her lively recounts of the previous day's activities.]

Jo Anne H. I'd like to introduce Judy White, early childhood curriculum coordinator for Shelby County. And now, I'll begin my demonstration with a bit of personal history.
[Jo Anne captivates the gathering with her tales and her presentation on storytelling. "Every child has a story to tell." The group really enjoys telling their own stories and then recording them.]

[Curtain down]

SCENE II

As the curtain rises again, we find our cast gathered in front of the African Room in the Birmingham Museum of Art.

Lisa. That was a very nice lunch.

Carol. Yes, I really enjoyed it.

Laurie. The food from the Critic's Corner was delightful.

Peggy. Let me introduce Ellen Elsas. She will be our guide today through the African Room.

Ellen. You have to come the museum to experience the art first-hand. African Art is conceptual art. Notice that the masks depicting women have little or no mouth and large ears.
[This is greeted by groans from the players. Ellen continues to inform the players of ways to interpret African Art. She closes by letting the players write a journal entry about one piece from the exhibition.]

[Curtain down]

SCENE III

As the curtain rises the players are all gathered in the museum gift shop eagerly waiting for Julie's presentation to begin.

Julie. We'll begin with a brief tour of several rooms.
[Julie leads the group through several rooms and instructs the players to find a portrait and write the feelings and thoughts of the person in the picture. After everyone finishes, the group again tours the rooms with each participant sharing their "interior monologue". The group enjoys all pieces and is especially moved by Marilyn's Indian speaking to the group.]

Peggy. Let's take a few minutes to respond to Julie's demonstration.

the end

Note from the author :
The Art Museum and the presentations were wonderful, inspiring experiences. I hope they were not trivialized by my risk-taking format.

Samford University Writing Project
Daily Log
July 31, 1991

My children come closer and hear a story. Listen carefully and learn from me. The Great Spirit who formed me from the dust of the ground now listens and will witness to the truth of my story.

Beyond the Wilderness of Weary Writers, deep in the forest called Beeson Woods, there gathered travelers from the four winds. These travelers agreed to form a tribe and dwell together, for their need was great. Each traveler had a story to tell, a song to sing, or a mission to be fulfilled. Their agreement was that they would remain together until they had each gained the strength to complete their life work.

Selected as Chief was Dave-Who-Speaks-With-Mac-Tongue. Chief Dave was a wise and kind leader. The desire of his heart was that each traveler reach inside himself and find the strength to carry on.

Chief Dave made sure that the travelers were provided for physically because he understood how physical strength touches spiritual strength. Chief Dave knew better than many of the travelers that there is a strength found in weakness. Not wanting the group to grow faint, he had Princess Julie provide refreshing cups of cool fruit and squares of dainty pastry for their breaking of the nighttime fast.

As the fellowship of travelers gathered they spoke softly of the night dreams. Some had dreamed of family and longed to be with their loved ones. Brave Don-Who-Wears-A-Smile revealed a dream that had caused him deep concern. He had seen his young squaw, Lisa-Who-Has-A -Big-Dog-In-The-Family accepting a bear-like animal into their lodge. He trembled as he told of the fence he had seen Squaw Lisa erecting around their ancestral lodge. Brave Don felt sure that he would have to put his moccasin down to keep the animal out of his immediate family. A discussion followed the revelation of this dream in which the travelers mulled over the effects of putting your moccasin down on a "New Squaw". Brave Don is very brave indeed!

Princess Peggy-With-The-Gentle-Laugh realized that these night dreams were precious treasures to be recorded. She led the group to the quiet stream that flows through Beeson Woods, the Stream of Journal Writing. Each member of the tribe was refreshed by the healing stream as it's waters poured into their pens and flowed out across their papers, revealing their deepest thoughts. Some of the tribe wrote of days gone by while others dreamed of the days to come. The words spoken often by Princess Peggy were a comfort to remember, "The journal is for the writer, so stretch and grow!"

Chief Dave, having spent yesterday in meditation, missed the tribe's trip across the "BIG WATERS" to the land of the Zulu and the Yoruba. A traveler at heart, Chief Dave listened as Princess Laurie read the cave wall dedicated to reminding the tribe of the mysteries of the Africian Room. As a result of the reading, there was an outpouring of emotion from the tribe and a re-telling of stories; stories of masks, and art, and quiet halls.

Princess Peggy reminded the tribe that soon their time together would end. She ask the tribe to consider recommending a similar journey to other travelers. Would the tribe consider a journey to the edge of the world in Shelby County a worthy destination for the future clan? "Only if we are allowed to take part in the journey," was their reply.

Princess Lisa was prepared to present information on Publication to the tribe. Cave wall art, smoke signals, notches on sticks, and an occasional tattoo being the only previous experience with publication, the clan was amazed with the wonders of audio, video, and computers! Creativity was the key as the travelers produced a take home product to encourage other travelers.

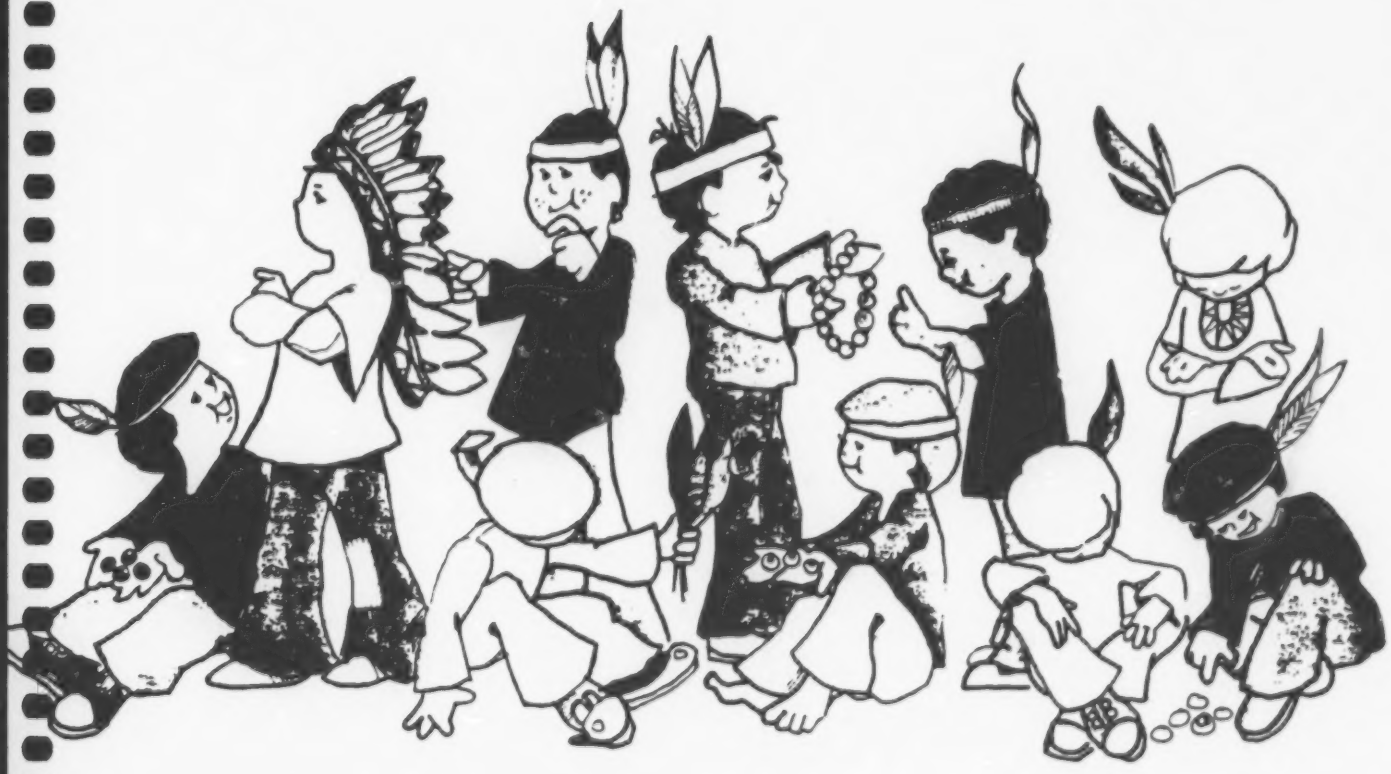
Visitors to the tribe included the Chief Princess of Oak Mountain Elementary School, Mrs. Evelyn Blake, and Chief Princess of Elementary Supervision for the Shelby

County Clan, Mrs. Rebecca Nail. Both of these visitors were willing participants in Princess Lisa's presentation.

Hunger called the travelers away from the presentation and cook fires blazed through the woods. These travelers refuse to go hungry even in the face of new technology. Maybe this proves that the travelers agree with Princess Lisa. The product is not the important thing.

Picking up pen and paper the travelers wrote to Princess Lisa. Many thanks for the wonderful presentation. When we return to the Wilderness of Weary Writers will we remember your words?

As the tom-toms of Mac fill the air, the travelers watch the sun slowly slip behind the quiet hills, and they wait. They wait and they consider. Life beyond these woods, what will it be like when they go back? Will they wither and dry up? Or, will they carry back sips of water from the gentle stream, words of wisdom from a loving chief, the gift of laughter from a quiet princess?



Samford University Writing Project
August 1, 1991

Week four has ended. One more to go...we've been converted, revived, had love affairs, accommodated alien beings from the planet of Zadar, survived volcanic eruptions, revisited the Old South and the depths of Africa, have visited flower gardens, art museums and the theater and have wandered around in the wilderness...only to find that we aren't finished yet.

This was Thursday. We barely had time to get a cup of coffee and refreshments provided by Peggy when we were whisked off to the student center for a real treat. Students from the first "Young Writer's Camp" read stories and poems. Wonderful, wonderful! The camp is under the direction of last year's Samford Writing Project participants. The director is Judy Sandlin, and camp staff members are Evelyn Shaw, Ethel Morris, Cindy Gray, and Carol Dean. The students also shared an original song accompanied by Mark Barber on the guitar.

We stayed in the student center to share our writings and to cry a little. Carol read a fiction story based on the facts associated with Hurricane Hugo, Peggy shared her poetry books, Donna, Don, and Becky entertained us with tales of home brew, Aunt Eloise's hospital stay, and a college bomb threat. Then JoAnn read her piece about Jennifer, a young girl who died in a needless accident a few years ago. We all wiped away tears as we headed back to room 126 to see if the refreshments were still there.

JoAnne Hoffmann took care of the business of ordering official t-shirts and bags. Squaw Marilyn read the journal...she took the blanket which she usually wore around her shoulders off since the air conditioner in our teepee had been fixed.

Robin presented a delightful demonstration called "Building Community Through Writing" Our pockets were really full since we didn't have time for journals. We wrote and read until lunch.

After lunch, we shared in grade level groups about outside readings and plans for our classrooms in the fall. Our Thursday night gathering was at the Jeane's (Karen's) house but since the rest of the family was there, it was decided by the group that this was definitely a gathering at the Jeanes'. Or is it the Jeanes's?

Lisa

Samford University Writing Project
Daily Log
August 5, 1991

What a great start for the last week of the Writing Project! Lynne, Becky, and Mark gave us an overview of the Writers' Workshop in action.

Lynne led us through her first two days of introducing the Writers' Workshop in her classroom. She explained the organization of the students and the management system for the operation of Writers' Workshop.

Becky gave us the "Do's" and "Don't's" of the mini-lesson. She encouraged us to use the student writing as the curriculum and not the other way around.

Mark entertained us with an "Improper" and a "Proper" conferring scenario. Unfortunately, I think we've all told students, "You're not finished yet," or "I've given you the assignment, now get busy and write!" Mark emphasized that conferring was the heart of the Writers' Workshop, where the relationship between the two writers is established.

Lauren Jeane and Mark modeled a typical conference. The session ended with the reading of Lauren's essay. I know it brought tears to my eyes as well as to many others. I think I could feel Karen's heart swelling with pride as her daughter poured out her feelings about a very sensitive topic.

After lunch, we gathered in response groups. We ended the day typing corrections and revisions in the computer lab.

Cindy

P.S. The group is getting a "little" wild in the lab. We must not attract any "improper" attention.

P.P.S. Oh, what the heck!

OOps, I almost forgot to mention our guests!

Our guests today numbered seventeen. WOW! We must be doing something really "EXCELLENT."

Kirby Hallman, 7th grade English, Hewitt Middle School

Jody Stewart, 7th grade English, Hewitt Middle School

Mary White, 6th grade Math, Riverchase Middle School

Wanda Freels, 6th grade, Riverchase Middle School

Sarah Owens, Curriculum Coordinator, Pizitz Middle School

Reba Clark, Central Office, Vestavia Hills Schools

Joan Steese, 7th-12th grade English, Pell City

David Miles, Principal, Pizitz Middle School

Henry Clark, Central Office, Vestavia Hills Schools

Beth Edwards, 6th grade Language Arts, McAdory School

Carrie Anna Pearce, Samford School of Business, Experiential Education Specialist

Jan Dennis, Principal, Hewitt Trussville Middle School

Don Cornutt, Principal, Homewood Middle School

John Dedrick, Associate Principal, Homewood Middle School

Lauren Jeane, student, Pizitz Middle School

Michelle Hoffman, student, Thompson Middle School

Amy Dobelstein, student, Gresham Middle School

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
August 6,1991

ANNOUNCER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to our show "Writing Project Live" with your hosts Dr. David Roberts and Ms. Peggy Swoger. Our show is sponsored in part by Cindy's Sensational Catering Service. Call on Cindy for all your catering needs--tantalizing brunches a specialty. Check out her assortment of delicious pastries and unusual cheeses. Contact Cindy Robicheaux, owner/manager.

Now, here is your hostess, Ms. Peggy Swoger.

PEGGY: Thank you and welcome to our show. Our first guest this morning is Ms. Carolyn Kent. Ms. Kent is a second grade teacher at Cherokee Bend Elementary School. In 1989, she spent three weeks at the Martha's Vineyard Writing Workshop. She has recently returned from a trip to visit schools in Australia and New Zealand. Carolyn, tell us a little about your experiences with creating a classroom environment that encourages writing.

CAROLYN: I used to be a very structured teacher--one who believed that the "quiet class is the right class." Now my students read and write every day. With the help of a parent committee, my students publish individual books throughout the year, and we publish a class book each month. My classroom is orderly but no longer always quiet.

The trip to New Zealand was interesting, but I have been reaffirmed that we are doing the right things here. I am very fortunate to have a very supportive principal... Now if I can just get her to agree to the 10:30 tea time.

PEGGY: Thank you, Carolyn. Our next guest comes to us this morning via satellite (or is that video) from New York City. Our guest is Lucy Calkins, author of <u>Lessons from a Child</u> and other best-selling books about teaching writing to children.

LUCY (via "Writing Workshop a World of Difference"): I have discovered that it is good teachers, not textbooks and curriculum, that can make a world of difference. Writing Workshop can make a world of difference. Teachers should help children tap into real reasons to write.

PEGGY: I hope you have enjoyed our show this morning. We invite our audience to tune in to regular presentations of "Writing Workshop Live" beginning later this month in your local school.

ANNOUNCER: This segment of "Writing Project Live" has been brought to you courtesy of the computer technology experts of Write Now. Call on the experienced technicians of Write Now for preparation of all kinds of written documents--resumes, presentations, original literary works. Known for speed and accuracy--spelling an area of expertise--these experts can be found in Beeson Hall 24 hours a day. Call now 555-OHNO!

78 Carol Dean

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY WRITING PROJECT
August 7, 1991

What a day! From the sublime to frustration and back again!

The day began with delicious homemade cinnamon rolls, very graciously baked for us by Mrs. Roberts. Such a treat!

Next came the reading of the log.

We then moved right into a typical Writing Workshop class. Peggy presented a mini-lesson on the use and overuse of "being verbs" in writing. Becky took a status-of-the-class check, and everyone went straight to work.

The highlight of the workshop came as Becky seated herself in the "author's chair" to read her beautiful piece "Mapleberry Magic." (How many points would you give <u>that</u> title, Susan?) What a powerful piece on children's imaginations and the teacher's responsibility to foster, rather than stifle, them.

From there, we plunged into the issue we have intentionally skirted all summer--EVALUATION!

Questions...questions...questions exploded from around the room.

What comments are helpful to the student?
What will close him up?
How can I be sure I'm being fair?
How do we explain <u>purpose</u> or <u>audience</u>?
What about grammar?
What about GRADES? SEMESTER EXAMS? GRADE BOOKS?

Sadly, there are no absolute answers.

We were delighted to have with us Susan Yates, a teacher at Mountain Brook Junior High School. (Many of you would appreciate Susan's poem written last summer about the Macintosh entitled * ! #.) At this time, Susan shared with us her insights into evaluation and some ideas that have worked for her. Peggy will share with us tomorrow portfolio evaluation--a process that is supported by the National Writing Project.

Lunch break was definitely in order.

The afternoon brought guest Ginger Brown, an elementary school teacher in the Mountain Brook system. Ginger shared with us her experiences as a writing teacher. Of particular interest was the support group she started with other interested teachers. I can't help but think of the old song "Lean on Me." We'll all be so much stronger if we can lean on each other. Maybe we can form some support groups among ourselves?

The rest of the afternoon was spent in what is commonly known as "catch-up" time. The scrapbook committee has been working overtime! And what a beautiful book they are producing! Donna, have you considered a side business in calligraphy?

Others headed straight across the street to spend several hours with Mac. We're going to miss him. If some of our spouses knew how much time we've spent with Mac this summer, they might be jealous.

Because I was a nice person and agreed at the last minute to write today's log, I'm going to allow myself the liberty to make a personal comment. Last August I left the Writing Project on a high, confident that I would never again have an experience equal to that one. But I was wrong. This summer has been incredible! What a wonderful group of writers, teachers, friends has met and shared together for the past five weeks. What a wealth of new ideas and enthusiasm has been generated! I am so grateful to have been a part of it. I'm certain, now, that there will <u>never</u> be an experience to equal <u>this</u> one.

Carol Dean

Final Log; August 8, 1991; Samford University Writing Project

7:00 a.m. on the day after. I sit at my Mac with its blank screen, but I look at the forest of trees, early morning sun resting there before its hot journey west. The forest is my own center of peace where I return each time I sit down with Mac. Usually I would be sipping from my coffee cup, but since I have run out of coffee and shopping time, it's hot tea today and the last little bagel with strawberry cream cheese. I open my writer's notebook, a new one I began last evening as I read your portfolios and thought about the richness of this summer's work. I continue collecting thoughts that have been weaving themselves together all evening and this morning.

Dick Graves' poems and music of rivers touched a deep cord in us. Many of you included pieces of writing from that experience. I am thinking of the waters of many rivers that have brought us together for five weeks this summer. It is as if we all are Donna's magic pebbles that have tumbled our jagged ways to the same deep ocean current, far from familiar shores. The secrets of tides and gravity push us around to hit against one another, involuntarily reshaping, smoothing. We are irrevocably changed by circumstances and one another.

The miracle is that we all feel we are the better for it! We return to our families and students more honest, Mark says, more open to communication, more willing to put ourselves on the line, revealing whatever we are line by line to ourselves and others. Are we writers? Do we feel like writers? "A nonwriter," JoAnn Trenary says, "is a person who <u>does not</u> write, not a person who <u>cannot</u> write." I am very touched by the risks that so many of you took in order to <u>be</u> writers. I share all of your insecurities and your wonderings about what comes next. While we're still in the same ocean current, supporting each other, I want to share your questions and wonderings with each other, with the idea that there is comfort in knowing we are not alone in these new waters:

"I wonder if I have the self-discipline to continue writing when I don't 'have to'; sometimes I feel as though I am forcing a piece to develop. Does this happen to 'real writers'?"

"Sometimes I feel like the words aren't inside me and I can't write anything decent. What does this say about me as a writer? Am I a 'real' writer? I would like to be!"

"I'm wondering if I'll continue to write for myself--I think I will. I'm finally convinced that writing centers my ideas and thoughts. I wonder if I'll share my writings with anyone as safe as my response group was?"

"Will I continue to write for <u>me</u>? I sincerely hope so! Much of my writing has had a cleansing effect on me as a person."

"Am I satisfied with my own writing? Can I ever be?"

"I sometimes wonder how good I really am. When I listen to or read other people's writing I begin to wonder if mine isn't in need of great work. Maybe I need something published to build up my confidence. Generally I am very insecure as a writer."

"I wonder <u>most</u> if I can continue to write and grow without the support of this group (or one like it.) I tend not to allow myself time when I go it alone. Can I keep writing without getting boring--saying the same thing again and again. I like the articles based on classroom research, but I wonder if I can do that sort of piece. Right now, it seems beyond me. I'm going to try to keep a class journal--we'll see."

"Am I actually a writer or just a scribe of personal events in my life? How do I make the transition from personal narratives (which I'm very comfortable with) to other

forms of writing? How can I become a better proofreader?"

"I have discovered this summer that I am too caught up in the words I am putting down And not enough with saying what I have to say. . .I am wondering why it seems to be more difficult for me now than it was when I started the workshop. Is it because I am now too analytical?" *(consider the kind of writing you have attempted)*

"I wonder how some people can write such wonderful first drafts. It takes me a long time to arrive at my stories. Maybe I need to practice more."

"Do I have an audience for my work or is it a mere extension of my personality that is only for my own growth and development?"

"Will I ever feel like a writer? I want to <u>feel</u> like sharing my writing. I hope that will come as I write more."

"Am I any good? When does one know if his words are worth hearing? I truly want to be heard. I have much to say."

"I would like to know where you feel my greatest weaknesses are. Things I need to work on to improve myself--Help!"

And just think--we <u>are</u> the writing teachers. The students, however, are probably more fortunate than we--they're only in it for grades, right? Wrong. They too will have real reasons to write when you get hold of them again, according to your position papers. The thing about becoming magic pebbles is that a little of the magic rests wherever we go like the sunlight rests on the leaves of my forest.

Although you considered your weakest writing to be the position papers, you had profound things to say. Laurie "addicted to learning" Watson asks a simple question--"How do children learn?" I am wondering how many teachers ask this question. I'm also wondering what kind of learning theories teachers have--do some teachers really believe that fear is necessary to learning? Certainly Laurie is <u>not</u> one of those because she wants her students to be free to "experiment with language" like children do as they learn to talk. Laurie wants writing "intertwined in science, math, social studies and every other part of our school day. School," she says, "should be a place of connections. Reading and writing should be the thread to sew our curriculum together."

Don "who puts moccasin down" Garrett believes "There is something very humanizing about being allowed to voice yourself...and being heard." His children "write freely" and "share their ideas with one another," in an "environment that is free of fear and criticism." And, remember Becky's dragon lady from her early days whom she fled, remembering "nothing I learned--except the fear." And Carol "Repeat" Dean's fairy tale in which children have chosen the pen as their weapon against the dragon? Her knight proclaims, "Let the children write! Listen to their voices! Empower them with confidence!" She says, "Most of the people were skeptical--they were still controlled by fear of the dragon. . . .They did not believe children with pens could overcome such a mighty force."

Marilyn "I love to teach" Self writes: "Children need to question their world and search for the answers. If we do not create searchers, we have condemned our world to an existence of sameness: there will be no new ideas, no inventions, no cures of illness, no willingness to change, and no freshly written words to challenge our minds."

Karen, "humble pie" Jeane, wants her English classroom to be a place of "adventure, discovery and growth." She says, "They should not be forced to make their thoughts fit into one mold or formula; there is nothing magic in producing exactly five paragraphs. . .We high school teachers forget that our students have their own way of seeing and their own creative abilities. Students will learn," she says, "what has value to them."

JoAnne "pinup" Hoffmann, fortified with the Write Vitamin, wonders "How much knowledge future generations will be deprived of if our present generation continues to be nonwriters." She believes that "writing for enjoyment and purpose has to be the underlying reason for students to absorb and retain (skills)."

Robin "has pockets" Leberte, wants her students to "use their own experiences to develop a personal relationship with written language." She will "show them how to use all available resources, including each other, to improve their own writing." She believes that valuing students' writing gives them confidence.

JoAnn "write from the heart" Trenary startled me with a revolutionary statement: "A teacher helping students become writers refrains from an excessive amount of teaching. . . ." Let's sell that to the administration! And speaking of selling radical ideas to the administration, Lisa "diaper lady" Pemberton proposes that writing is "not an 'add-on' but rather the program itself." It is the way she will lead her students "to think, to ask questions, to clarify answers, to reflect on their understanding and to learn about their world." Look out Shelby County!

From the Couch-Potato Dynasty, Cindy "Soccer-to-'em" Robicheaux leaves us with a thought we can share as we make plans for the year: "Writing has revealed myself to me. The Writer's Workshop process can bring children in touch with themselves and the nature of the world."

Now, to Donna "be pure" Davis, I will treasure your gifts of yourself and your talents! This scrapbook is out-of-this-world! Many thanks to the hardworking scrapbook committee. The class of 1990 will be jealous! And to Mark "no position" Barber whose summer afternoons we all shared and will never forget, get yourself to a recording studio fast! What a gift you gave us! And to Publicity--thanks for TV and newspaper articles and whatever else gets into print later. You worked Hard! To the Administration Visitor Bureau--fantastic results--three pages of just visitors in our scrapbook! To the food committee--what can I say but go on a diet! The Anthology "get it right" groupies are still over there with Mac. Go home!

To Julie "log it and xerox it" Stipes, soon to be Clayton, I can't believe you still have to write a British lit paper after all this! You were an absolute jewel. To Dave "screw this chair" Roberts, this was the best summer I never spent with you! Let's do it again sometime. And finally to Lynne "how do you evaluate this" King, you were my measuring stick of success, so I read your evaluation with great delight! For the rest of you, here it is: "In light of the stated goals, the Summer Institute was a total success for me! Every goal was accomplished! I am amazed! My perspective on current theory and practices was blown wide open. I was ignorant about the vast range of professional publications dealing with writing in the classroom. I am thrilled to know of these resources for myself and for others. I still don't want to take responsibility for solving my own classroom problems. I'm still looking for "experts" to provide solutions. However, Summer Institute has convinced me I will never find that "expert" so I am going to become my own "expert." Thank you for providing the literate environment of Summer Institute where learning was a joy. --Lynne King

To Becky "Mapleberry Magic" Dobelstein: Your words have power against the dragon. Thank you , thank you, thank you for my poem from the Class of 1991.

It's now another Summer Afternoon and I have loved visiting with you through your wonderful writings, your questions and wonderings, your words of wisdom. Words we can keep with us forever. You'll be hearing about September Somethings soon.

Love, love, love to all

V. SUMMARIES OF PRESENTATIONS

Mark Barber

Writing Workshop: Conferences

BACKGROUND:

The Writing Workshop must never be considered a program, something that can be duplicated and handed out, and if all the proper steps and procedures are followed, guaranteed complete success. Success of the Writing Workshop depends entirely on the teacher's commitment to the individual student. Teachers must build relationships grounded on respect and sensitivity to the student's writing. Tom Romano say, "The initial job of the teacher is to make the student feel worthy, comfortable and accepted." Conferencing is designed to do just that. The conversation is between two human beings, two writers, interacting and sharing their feelings about a piece of art—the student's writing. Teachers must remember that their ultimate goal is to help the student internalize these conferences. By doing so, the students are better able to evaluate and manipulate their own writing and help others to do the same.

Conferencing is a skill that usually must be taught to the students. This can be done by modeling some incorrect conferences as well as dramatizing a writing class where the teacher gives little attention to ownership of students writing, time for writing, and a quality forum for response. Nancie Atwell provides the following information which can be posted in the classroom or given to students to assist them in their peer conferences.

APPLICATION:

1. The writer reads out loud.
2. Listeners respond, or if the piece is confusing, the listeners ask questions then respond.
3. Listeners focus on the content, perhaps asking questions about it. The writer teaches them about the subject.
4. The focus shifts to the text. What will the writer do next, and how will he or she do it?

PROCEDURES:

1. Keep conferences short! Ask children to tell you about their piece rather than read it to you. They may want to discuss their leads, conclusions, strong parts, or problem areas.
2. See as many writers as possible.
3. Go to your students so you can control the length of the conference. Random circulation is best.
4. Make eye contact with the writer. Do not look at, or read the paper or allow the writer to give it to you. The student is the focus of the conference.
5. Do not tell writers what should be in their writing or, worse, write on their pieces.

6. Build on what writers know and have done, rather than what they've left out or what is wrong with what is there.
7. Resist making judgments about the writing. Avoid generalized or contrived praise, and address specific parts of the writing.
8. When questioning students, ask about something you are curious about as a human being. What would you like to know more about? What did you not understand?

SOURCES:

In the Middle by Nancie Atwell
The Art of Teaching Writing by Lucy Calkins
Clearing the Way by Tom Romano

Donna Self Davis

Writing to Learn Science: Types of Rocks

BACKGROUND:

This presentation is the first lesson in my unit on rocks and minerals. The lesson is designed to introduce the lesson vocabulary and to expose the different aspects of rocks and minerals to the student.

APPLICATION:

Writing to Learn Science is an easy and exciting way to present science to the student while at the same time strengthening their abilities in language skills. Research indicates that use of the science vocabulary words in creative writing settings fosters a greater mastery of science concepts.

CLASSROOM OBJECTIVES:

My objectives are to expose the students to the unit vocabulary in an environment that is exciting and informative.

1. Students will develop an awareness of the vocabulary in the science unit.
2. Students will learn to classify basic groups of rocks.
3. Students will learn the basic origin of all rocks.
4. Students will research basic information vital to the understanding of rocks and record that research in a group setting.
5. Students will use the group research in a creative writing lesson.

Procedures:

1. Students were given a polished rock and asked to imagine the rock had special magical powers. They were asked to describe on paper what they would wish for with their rock.

2. The students were asked to share their wish. After their reading, the book Sylvestor and the Magic Pebble was read to the group.

3. An introduction on real rocks and their magic was shared. To show the origin of some igneous rocks, a model of a volcano was displayed and exploded. Students were given samples of the various types of rocks to observe and examine.

4. After displaying the vocabulary on colorful flashcards, the students were divided into response groups. The response groups were given the task of writing a geologically correct creative writing adventure using the vocabulary words. Research books and an extensive rock collection was used to aid in the development of the story.

5. Each response group shared its story with the group.

6. The group also had a demonstration on how to make rock candy.

EXTENSIONS:

To extend this activity, students might wish to construct and erupt their own volcanoes. They may wish to start their own rock collections or begin to study the plates of the earth. All of these activities will lend themselves to writing across the curriculum.

Rebecca B. Dobelstein

Mini-lessons: Writing Workshop's Huddle

BACKGROUND:

Writing workshop is founded on the idea that children need freedom and time to write. For this reason most of the class time is given over to student writing. However, the teacher is still the teacher and there are helpful strategies used by many writers which need to be introduced to the class as a whole. To insure a time for this, and to provide a framework for the writing workshop, Lucy Calkins developed the idea of the mini-lesson. She says that this five to ten minute period at the beginning of class functions much like a huddle does for a ball team. It gets them going!

As teachers, we must use the mini-lessons wisely. Nancie Atwell, in her book *In The Middle* , identifies three types of information that can be appropriately introduced during these times. She introduces classroom procedures, techniques related to a writer's craft, and skills essential to good writing. We cannot allow ourselves to encroach on time already promised to student writers, so we must not make this a time to impose curriculum. If used well, this short period can become a valuable time for the teacher to respond to the needs of the class.

APPLICATION:

Most of the ideas presented are appropriate for use at any grade level. Writing workshops are effective with all ages because all students have stories to write. At any level, group needs can be addressed through mini-lessons drawn from student writing. Teachers will need to evaluate individual and class needs and develop mini-lessons accordingly. If the sample mini-lesson used in the presentation is used in class it should be divided and used on several days.

PROCEDURES:

1. Introduce the idea that "real writers" use the beginning lines of a piece to "hook" the reading audience. Use examples of good leads in familiar literature. I used current Reader's Digest articles and the lead from a favorite childhood novel *Charlotte's Web* by E. B. White. Discuss with the class the effect these leads had on me.

2. Have students choose a work in progress from their own folders, perhaps a piece with which they were not satisfied. Instruct the students to read the beginning of their pieces and mark the first good stopping place. Identify this as the "lead." Ask students if changing this beginning could improve the piece.

3. Discuss some kinds of leads that writers can use in narrative writing. Show, on an overhead projector, samples of a typical lead and three effective leads (these were taken from Atwell's *In The Middle*, chapter 6). Discuss how changing the lead affected the presentation of the same information.

4. Review the three effective leads and suggest that students may want to try using these in their own writing.

5. Allow students about five minutes to brainstorm several possible new leads for the piece of writing they have chosen to use. Students may try one or more of the types modeled.

6. Depending on time available, either have a few students share how a new lead changed their pieces, or let students get into response groups to compare new and old leads.

7. Conclude by reminding students that changing the lead is one way that writers revise pieces. This is a tool that can be used at any time a writer feel it is needed to improve a piece.

RESOURCES:

Atwell, Nancie. *In the Middle: Writing, Reading, and Learning with Adolescents.* Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook,1987.

Calkins, Lucy M. *The Art of Teaching Writing.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1986.

Don Garrett

Integrating The Fine Arts Into The Language Arts

"In all cultural matters it is the form of growth that enables us to understand the form of the existing product."

Ernst Cassirer

BACKGROUND:

As a teacher, I am a valuable learning resource to my students, and I have come to realize that there are resources of far greater value within each student. Getting my students to "tap" their own resources and to utilize them is my greatest challenge. I have found great success in using the fine arts as a stimulant that children can use to express themselves in many forms, including writing. Using the arts as a bridge to writing is a powerful tool, in that it asks the child to create from his own experiences. In her essay, "Teaching English Composition As a Creative Art," Jean Pumphrey states that the creative process is a process of scattering, then the uniting of many parts. No one is certain what form the whole will take, but that is how discoveries are made. "That is what makes writing and all creative acts exciting." Ann E. Berthoff notes in her book, Reclaiming the Imagination, that "What the student of composition can learn from a study of the arts is of the greatest importance: the uses of chaos; the foolishness of depending on inspiration; the wisdom of depending on inspiration; the role of practice; the ambiguities of the audience; the dialectic of creativity and criticism. And patience."

Using music, drama and art as a catalyst for writing serves many purposes. The student develops self-esteem about himself, his writing and his ideas. The student becomes a risk taker and a decision maker. He becomes a thinker. And most importantly, he becomes a writer and will write for the mere beauty and pleasure it brings.

APPLICATION:

Because music is a universal language, this activity may be used in all disciplines and taught to students of all ages and abilities.

OBJECTIVES:

1. The students will describe how a musical selection makes them feel.

2. The students will use a musical selection and their feelings to draw a picture.

3. The students will explain their drawings to the class. (Choice of colors, shapes, lines, etc.)

4. The students will describe a scene that might take place during a musical selection. (What could be happening during this piece?)

5. The students will divide into groups and create a pantomime with the musical selection.

6. The students will perform their pantomimes for their peers.

7. The students will write about their scenes or any ideas that the music might have evoked.

8. The students will share their writing.

MATERIALS:

three instrumental musical selections
tape player/record player
art paper
crayons
pencils
writing paper

PROCEDURE:

1. Ask the students to clear their desks and to relax. Turn off the lights and begin playing a prepared musical selection on the record player/tape player.

2. After the selection, ask the students to describe how the music makes them feel. Explain that music affects each of us in many ways. Ask them to imagine a movie or television show without music.

3. Playing the same piece of music, tell the students that you are going to draw a picture of how the music makes you feel using various shapes, lines and colors. Draw a picture on the board as the children watch and listen.

4. Change musical selections and have the children draw a picture of how the music makes them feel. Emphasize to them that the drawing does not have to have any certain order or form. Tell them to let the music draw the picture.

5. Ask for a few volunteers to share their pictures with the class. (Why did they choose a specific shape, color or line?)

6. Playing a third musical selection, ask the students to imagine what type of scene could be taking place during this music.

7. Divide the class into groups and have them share their ideas with one another.

8. Instruct each group to choose one of the ideas to create a pantomime for the class. Give students a few minutes to prepare. (You are not looking for a rehearsed performance.)

9. After each group performs their pantomime with the music, give the class an opportunity to respond and ask questions.

10. When all groups have performed, point out that from one piece of music, many varied and unusual ideas were developed. Ask them to write about their scenes or about any idea the music might have inspired.

11. Play the musical selection over while they are writing.

12. After the class has been given time to write, share and respond to the pieces.

JoAnne Hoffmann

"Storytelling and the Recording of Non-Fiction
as a Basis for Writing"

BACKGROUND:

When teaching writing to children of all ages, the most common complaint seems to be that they have nothing to write. This can often be one of the most difficult obstacles for a teacher to overcome. This problem has caused me much concern in the many years that I have taught. One could always pick some clever topic and force the class to write on it. However, this technique bothered me greatly. How could you expect children to draw from their own experiences when they may not have any experience with my chosen topic? This concern lead to a need to go back to the basics.

The basics, in this case, was early childhood. During the middle to late preschool years, children are the model of creativity. Stories come rolling off their tongues like water off a duck's back. They can occupy themselves for hours with make-believe friends and stories about any and everything imaginable. What happens to all those creative juices? Surely they don't dry up and go away!

Being the dutiful teacher that I am, I went back to my students and asked them to tell me stories of things that had happened to them or stories that had been told to them. I was excited to find that my children were still as creative as ever! My balloon was rapidly deflated when I suggested that they put these stories on paper. These interesting and exuberant stories became boring and nondescript. I could only hang my head in tears and wonder what had happened? They had had something to write, but what had been written had little resemblance to the colorful stories that had once been told.

Not being one to give up easily, I arrived the next day with solution in hand. A tape recorder would be used to record the story exactly as told. The students, although reserved at first, loved this method of capturing their words. After much conferencing, it was discovered that many of the students had changed their words due to problems with spelling and grammar. Through this method of collecting the stories, they could get added help with the technical aspects without losing the color of their writing.

This technique really isn't new. Many authors have traveled the country collecting stories for centuries. Why not use it a little closer to home?

OBJECTIVES:

Students will be given the opportunity to collect their thoughts and stories in the original and uninhibited form that they were initially created.

Students will gain confidence and self-esteem from the realization that they can be authors.

Students will also become better writers once they overcome the obstacles of poor spelling and grammar skills.

Students will be able to work cooperatively in peer tutoring and editing groups.

Students will become more creative and spontaneous in their writing, thus becoming better writers.

PROCEDURES:

MATERIALS:

Tape Recorder
Blank Tapes

The students should be instructed to think of a story. It could be something that really happened, make-believe, sad, happy, funny, memorable, or even a pet peeve. Group brainstorming might be helpful to start the process rolling.

Once this has been accomplished, students may gather in small groups of two or three and begin recording their stories. I found that an audience sometime helps, the storyteller to expand and embellish the story.

Once the story has been recorded, the student will begin transcribing his/her story. Students may choose to work with another student during this process, especially if that student has difficulty with the mechanics of written language. This step is especially helpful for very young children and students who might be disadvantaged or learning disabled.

The student will become involved in the editing process through peer and self editing processes. When the student is satisfied with his/her finished product, the piece may then be published.

APPLICATIONS AND EXTENSIONS:

1. This process is very helpful when working with very young children, preschoolers, or learning disabled students.
2. Students can use this technique in all subject areas.
3. This method of collecting stories works well as a center activity.
4. Taped stories could be placed in a listening center to create a more personalized activity.
5. The stories might be used to develop a class book or collection of short stories.
6. This method would work well for use at holiday gatherings. Students could record stories told by the elders in their family. This would not only yield a terrific collection of stories, but also would result in an auditory record of a student's personal heritage.

SOURCE:

Graves, Donald H. (1989) The Reading/Writing Teacher's Companion: INVESTIGATE NONFICTION. Heinemann.

Karen Lilley Jeane

WRITING TO LEARN: READER RESPONSE CRITICISM

BACKGROUND:

I believe that students read literature to know themselves.Responding to literature on a personal level encourages students to compare their thoughts, feelings, and reactions to those of others. Louise Rosenblatt says that the same text will have a different meaning and value at different times and under varying circumstances. Allowing students to write their responses provides the opportunity for them to clarify their thoughts and grow.

APPLICATION:

Writing as part of the process involved in reader response criticism is applicable to any child of writing age. A language arts classroom could, obviously, be the setting, but the technique could also be used in a social studies classroom, in an ecology unit, or in any area in which students read a text from which they evaluate ideas.

CLASSROOM OBJECTIVES:

Students will read a poem and respond to specific questions about the poem so that a personal response will be elicited, expanding the underlying meaning of the text and increasing the student's understanding of self.

PROCEDURES:

1. Discuss with students the following instructions, which will be on the board:
   - A) Read the title of the poem and make a prediction concerning what the poem will be about;
   - B) Read the first two stanzas and revise or reaffirm your prediction;
   - C) Explain in your own words what happens in the poem;
   - D) Describe what you felt when you read the poem;
   - E) Select the single word, passage, or image in the text that was a central moment for you.

   Point out to students that they will be responding to the text before, during, and after reading.

2. Ask students to read the poem and follow the directions.

3. Ask students to meet with response groups to share their responses.

4. Return to large group and share some responses the groups found interesting. Allow time to discuss ideas which surface.

5. Ask students to freewrite a response to the question," What in your personal experience made you react to this text or what personal experience did it bring to mind?"

6. Share writing as students are willing.

EXTENSION:

This technique is helpful in analyzing poetry, short stories, novels, plays, or essays. It is another method of having students respond to their writing.

Lynne King

ORGANIZING WRITERS' WORKSHOP: DAYS 1 AND 2

BACKGROUND

For one week every April the halls of Pizitz Middle School display creative and elaborate pieces of student art. These are in the form of campaign posters signaling it is once again time to elect Student Council officers. With little or no coaxing from teachers, students voluntarily spend countless hours and dollars circulating petitions, making posters, printing stickers, and writing speeches on behalf of their own or even a friend's campaign. Teachers and parents often marvel at the interest and ability some of the "average" students display in this process.

In her book *In The Middle*, Nancie Atwell offers an explanation for this phenomenon. ". . .Adolescents' raging enthusiasms achieve incredible ends when the ends are kids' own . I've seen eighth graders work harder than I thought possible on claims they staked for themselves." Transforming the classroom into a writers' workshop creates a place where students are able to stake their own claims and bring their raging enthusiasm to learning through the writing process.

While a writers' workshop offers students freedom to pursue their own interests, it is a very organized and predictable environment. Each day's schedule is the same: five to seven minutes for a mini lesson, status of the class check, twenty to twenty-five minutes to write and/or confer, ten minutes for group share. The classroom is arranged to meet the needs of writers. There are designated areas to write, confer, think, turn in papers to be edited, save completed work, or borrow materials. After only two days of writers' workshop, students are functioning comfortably within the guidelines of the workshop. This presentation goes through a typical day one and two of writers' workshop when the classroom management and organization are established for both the student and the teacher.

PROCEDURES:

1. Begin day one by rehearsing orally various stories you, as the teacher, have to tell. Be sure to include an example of one story you can not tell because you do not know enough about it.

2. Ask students to take 3 minutes to rehearse stories they have to tell. Suggest that they write down notes as they rehearse their potential stories.

3. Ask students to take 2 minutes to tell a neighbor about the stories he/she is thinking of telling. Take 2 more minutes and switch roles.

4. Talk as a whole group, allowing individual students to share with the group some of their story ideas. Respond with interested questions, sayback or confirmation of the student's topic.

5. Display and explain briefly the 6 rules for writing workshop. Point out the designated areas around the room for writing and confering.

6. Sit down and write. Students will follow your example and will begin writing. After about 10 minutes, stop your own writing to move among the students, conducting brief conferences.

7. After about twenty minutes of writing time, ask the group to join you in a circle for group share. Explain the purpose and the rules of group share time at the end of each day's writers' workshop. Ask students to go around the circle stating which topic they decided to write on. Ask students to bring this first draft to class the next day. This concludes day one of writers' workshop.

8. Begin day 2 by giving each student a folder with appropriate forms for the records you want them to keep as writers. Tell them to save all of their writing in this folder. It is their text for this workshop.

9. Introduce status of the class check by explaining briefly some of the things writers do: continue draft one, start draft two, revise, confer with classmate or teacher, abandon piece and start a new topic. Take a status of the class check and begin writing.

10. Five to ten minutes before the end of class, call the students together for group share. You may want to ask for volunteers to share or you may want to have a planned sharing on the second day.

SOURCE:

This two-day procedure is taken from "Getting Started," chapter 4 of Nancie Atwell's *In the Middle*.

"Writers' workshop isn't an add-on; it is the English course, where everything that can validly be described as English is taught as sensibly as it can be taught, in the context of whole pieces of . . . students' writing" (Atwell,1987,p. 62).

Robin Leberte

A POCKETFUL OF FRIENDS: Building Community Through Writing

BACKGROUND:

A well -developed sense of community is essential for a productive classroom. This activity is one way in which I start building relationships in my second grade classroom starting on the first day of school. I compare my students to pockets which contain many beautiful and interesting treasures which I look forward to learning more about. The focus of the presentation is "the important thing about a pocket is what is inside".

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will develop an awareness that objects can be very meaningful .
2. Students will write a personal narrative.
3. Students will share their work.

APPLICATION:

This activity is suitable for any group of writers regardless of age. The choice of Katy No-Pocket as a literary lead in might not be appropriate for older students although it works well for my second graders.

PROCEDURES:

1. On the day before planned presentation, pass out small felt pockets to each member of the group. Tell them to take the pockets home, put something special in them and bring them back to class the next day. I deliberately leave the directions vague at this point and do not give suggestions or examples.

2. Ask students to take out their felt pockets, a pencil and a piece of paper.

3. Start the presentation by reading the children's book Katy No-Pocket aloud.

4. Discuss the special cargo which Katy carried in her pocket. By this time the students are very eager to share their special cargo.

5. Set a timer for approximately twenty minutes to be used writing about what is inside their pockets.

6. At the end of the twenty minutes, the class is divided into small response groups where they will share their writing.

7. After about fifteen minutes of small group sharing, the students return for whole group sharing. I allow everyone who wants to share with the large group do so.

Lisa Pemberton

Publication of Children's Writing

BACKGROUND:

Donald Grave, in Writing: Teachers and Children at Work , states that publishing contributes strongly to a writer's development giving the child a hardcover record of past accomplishments, a sense of audience, and tangible evidence that the child is progressing. It also gives the teacher an idea about what the child has learned and what needs to be taught.

He feels further that publication is important for all children rather than just for the smart children. He cautions, however, that publication not be a substitute for the writing program. He insists that children need to write daily and get help with their work in draft so that publication is seen as the end of a long process.

Publication of children's writing is widely recognized as one of the integral steps of the "writing process," but it is sometimes seen as time-consuming and expensive. Several authors (Harste and Short in Creating Classrooms for Authors) suggest easy, low-cost options for publication such as book-making, newspapers, class magazines, displays in the classrooms and hallways, posters, games, invitations, and announcements. The authors further recommend that students submit their work to the school paper, the local newspaper, trade magazines that publish student writing, or writing contests.

Atwell, in Coming to Know: Writing to Learn in the Intermediate Grades, suggests varying the genre to include correspondence, oral histories and interviews, scripts for radio and television shows, calendars, shadow boxes and dioramas with accompanying texts. John Marvell, in an article published in Technology and Learning, April, 1991, expands the product that he and his own son produced in his second grade classroom to include the camcorder and Apple computer.

Calkins, in Living Between the Lines, suggests that students create projects from entries in a "writing notebook." The projects themselves may include picture books and other commonly used genres, but she implies two subtle differences. First, she encourages writers to begin to see and use the connections between writings as a basis for the product itself rather than the linear practice of writing, revision, and final draft or publication. Then, she explains that the product have a real purpose and depth rather than just doctoring up the entries to make them suitable for public appearances.

APPLICATION:

I believe that children's writings at all grade levels need to be published to foster a sense of accomplishment and success. I also believe that publication of any kind is best celebrated if the child and teacher have a clear purpose for the product. It has been my experience as a classroom teacher that publication of children's work needs to be as easy to do as possible, low-cost, varied enough to allow for individual interests and talents, and an ongoing part of the everyday class activities. The activities suggested in this presentation were selected because each is easy to explain and appeals to most age and grade levels.

PROCEDURE:

1. Establish a purpose for publication. (I read an original story book about a little girl who had a red wagon.)
2. Rotate participants through learning centers where they will experience some of the different types of media available for publication of children's writings.

a. "Print Shop"- cut and paste activities such as bookmaking, advertisements, cartoon making, book markers
b. "Show Time"- creative dramatic activities such as puppets, newspaper props, dress-up materials
c. "WRIT 91 Radio Station"- tape recorder, camera, and slide projector for producing slide show and/or tape
d. "Television Studio"- video camera for producing a commercial, use with the Apple Video Overlay Card, Apple computer, and Dazzle Draw
e. "News Network" - computer with "Children's Writing and Publishing Center" program to produce newsletter

3. After time has been allowed for everyone to participate in the center activities, participants may share their products, have a short discussion and a question/answer time.

Cynthia Robicheaux

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

BACKGROUND:

Creative Problem Solving is a process that allows people to apply both creative and rational thinking to find solutions to problems. CPS is the most basic of all skills. Teaching children how to think and how to apply their thoughts toward a desired outcome is both complicated and fulfilling. Since the future is filled with uncertainties, we cannot provide children with all the information they will need to deal with problems in our ever-changing world. We can, however, help to provide them with the skills necessary to cope with the problems that they will face in the future that have no answers.

APPLICATION:

The creative problem solving process uses the four modes of language -listening, reading, talking, and writing. Writing skills and the higher level thinking skills are enhanced throughout every phase of the CPS process as the students clarify their thinking, elaborate with details, and create and revise in each step.

OBJECTIVES:

1. The student will be able to think creatively to generate a large number of possibilities.
2. The student will be able to evaluate options based on given criteria.
3. The student will be able to make inferences.
4. The student will be able to incorporate writing into every step of the CPS process.

PROCEDURES:

1. Divide the class into groups.
2. Introduce each step of the CPS process with an explanation of the purpose of that step.
3. Students will work through each step in their groups pooling their ideas and recording their ideas.
4. Each group will share their results with the class.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Have students draw, discuss, or act out their results.
2. Use the CPS process on stories used for reading.
3. Use the CPS process to solve classroom problems.
4. Use the CPS process to write stories.
5. Use the CPS process to enhance the writing process.

SOURCES:

CPS for Kids. Bob Eberle and Bob Stanish. DOK Publishers, 1980.

Marilyn Self

Writing To Learn Science: Earthworms

BACKGROUND:

Science process skills include: observing, communicating, collecting and interpreting data, inferring, predicting, formulating questions and hypotheses, and making operational definitions. This list of science processes, while incomplete, helps us to see how important reading and writing skills are to the scientist. A questioning mind is a must for the scientist. It has been pointed out recently that young children, those same young children who constantly ask, "But why?", are turned off to science before they reach the third grade. Could this say something to us as teachers of science? Are we leaving out something that would foster the desire to "find out" in our children?

An effective science program must be activity centered. The activities must be relevant to world experience and create inn children the need to question the world around them. A child that learns to enjoy asking questions, and then finding the answers, will be better prepared to face the future.

Young children need concrete experience. The activities should be brief and active with plenty of hands-on exercises through out. Teachers should allow plenty of time for social interaction and questioning.

Science activities provide children the opportunity to observe, think, and report. These opportunities create a natural springboard for writing.

APPLICATION:

Patricia Johnston, in her chapter of the book : Roots in the Sawdust says, "What I have discovered is that writing helps my students understand science more fully than any other teaching strategy can." In the same article she states, "Students understand more and remember it longer because of writing."

PROCEDURES:

1. Share experiences about fishing and baiting the hook with worms. If you have a story that would help to get the idea across read it to the children.
2. Have the children free write about the first time they held a worm.
3. Have the children share their writing in response groups or with the large group.
4. Give each child a cup of dirt and a worm. Have the children draw pictures of their worms and write observations they make as they watch.
5. Show the children a picture of a plant. Discuss how the plant and worms are related.
6. Have the children list any other questions they might have about worms. Allow the children to research their questions. Have the children read about worms and then answer the questions. Do not allow note taking while they are reading. This will help the children to write what they have learned not what they are reading.
7. Help the children learn what an earthworm does to the soil by making an earthworm castle in your classroom. Have children layer sand and dirt in a clear container. Add Worms. Cover the container with black paper to keep out the light. Have the children draw a picture of the container and write a prediction of how the soil will look after a few days with the worms.

8. Have each child write one thing that they learned on a piece of paper. Have the children pass their papers , adding something new to each paper they receive. Write what you have learned!
9. After several days uncover the worm castle and see who made a correct prediction.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

1. The children can make individual worm houses to take home to observe.
2. Make Chocolate Worms.
3. Make Dirt Cake and serve with worms.

Julie Stipe

Discovering a Person Through Interior Monologue

BACKGROUND:

Writing is more than learning to put words on paper that the teacher will find pleasing -- it is the culmination of internal sensations, thoughts, memories, associations, and reflections (A Handbook to Literature, 1972). The beginning of all writing is personal, a stream of ideas flowing inside each of us. This stream is enriched by hundreds of tributaries leading into it, causing the steady flowing waters to burst into a strong inescapable current. Once a writer plunges into the water, his deepest ideas are able to surface on paper with the light strokes of a pen. This is where a person emerges. James Moffett has said the interior dialogue is the beginning of all forms of writing -- drama (what is happening), narrative (what happened), exposition (what happens), and argumentation (what may happen) (Teaching the Universe of Discourse, 1983). It is the dialogue in our head which leads a writer to create the interior monologue on paper. This type of writing can be revealing, as it allows a writer to assume another point of view and make it his own. The interior monologue can be used to lead students into other written forms such as the dramatic monologue, dialogue, and eventually playwriting.

APPLICATION:

Though at first glance this may seem to be purely an English activity, it can be used in social studies, science, and fine arts classrooms. The level and depth of discussion can be varied according to grades to accommodate various ages. For example, a middle school social studies class might write sketches of historical characters to gain a greater understanding of that period. Science students might write monologues of their own questions and thought processes as they conduct experiments. In addition, the more thorough the grasp students have of the interior monologue, the more likely they will be able to have a greater understanding of analyzing literature.

PROCEDURE:

A. Interior Monologue

1. As an introduction to these activities, have the students visit an art museum or observe prints of portraits in the classroom.

2. Gather the group together in front of a portrait and read to them an appropriate poem exemplifying the interior monologue (an example for upper level high school is "My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning).

3. Tell them that this is an example of a dramatic monologue, then ask what they think an interior monologue would be -- what would the Duchess be saying (use the "I" point of view).

4. Discuss interior monologue, dramatic monologue, and stream of consciousness.

5. Have each student choose a portrait and write an interior monologue.

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6. If doing this activity in an art museum have each student read this monologue in front of the portrait which inspired it. If doing the activity in the classroom, allow students to guess which portrait inspired the monologue.

B. Dramatic Monologue

7. Allow students to find a partner and write a dramatic monologue using the characters for the earlier writing.

8. Partners may read to each other and then to the group and discuss how their writing changed when creating a dramatic monologue.

C. Dialogue

9. Discuss how a dialogue differs from monologues and how the point of view changes.

10. Using the same partners, have students write a dialogue between their characters and discuss the changes associated with dialogue writing.

D. Playwriting

11. Using these activities as an introduction to the study of a play, have the group discuss the additions necessary to writing a play rather than monologues and dialogues.

12. Allow students to write an original play or model a work they have studied previously.

REFERENCES:

Corcoran, Bill and Emyrs Evans, ed. Readers, Texts, Teachers. Portsmouth: Boynton-Cook, 1987.

Moffett, James. Active Voices. Portsmouth: Boynton-Cook, 1981.

Moffett, James. Teaching the Universe of Discourse. Portsmouth: Boynton-Cook, 1983.

JoAnn Trenary

POETRY: HAIKU

BACKGROUND:

In the forward of For the Good of the Earth and Sun by Georgia Heard, Lucy Calkins commends Ms. Heard's abilities to look at the littlest details of reading and writing classrooms and find in them important truths around which any type of writing can become magical. Ms. Hearn's methods of teaching an appreciation for poetry and poetry writing skills have grown out of her own life and associations. She believes that to be a writer of anything, narrative or poetry, one must be able to draw from experiences that are important in one's life. Children develop a love of poetry by reading many different types, discussing poetry with others, writing their own, sharing and publishing.

APPLICATION:

The responsibilities of the teacher in teaching a child to write poetry then, as I see it, begins with providing exposure to all types of poetry and poets. The student then becomes aware of the fact that poetry is an unlimited method of playing with words and can take on a variety of forms and styles, used at the poet's discretion.

In addition, by providing an open and accepting climate, the teacher encourages the students to choose topics for their writing that are important to them without threat of limitations put on them by teacher expectations.

Older students need to be introduced to a variety of styles and forms of poetry that have been popularly duplicated for years. Examples are cinquain, haiku, diamante and limericks.

Throughout the process, a teacher must teach the student to be observant, not only of outward things to see, but of inward feelings and responses. She must help the student explore ideas and feelings, and allow them time to write in their own forms and styles.

A teacher must provide an audience for the students' writings in the form of response groups, class readings, or individual counselling.

PROCEDURES:

1. What is a poem? Have students express ideas. Be positive and accepting of all.
2. Hand out poetry books and ask students to read the poems inside, choosing those they do and don't like, keeping in mind their reasons.
3. Meet in response groups to discuss and share poetry from books read. Discuss differences in poets' writings.
4. Combine response groups and discuss how poems differ sometimes in their subjects, rhythm, and style.
5. Focus in on form of poetry and discuss a favorite form of the Japanese, haiku. Relate the history of this type of poem.
6. Read some haiku poems written by others and point out the images that inspired the poet.
7. Remind students of the restrictions of haiku and have them find a place to write their own.
8. Have all share their original haiku with an audience.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM:

1. Students might enjoy developing their own poetry pattern as the Japanese had done with haiku.

2. Haiku poetry writing is an excellent extension in science, because it involves the skills of observation and relates to nature.

3. Haiku could be used to enhance a study of Japanese culture in social studies.

4. Americanized haiku is based on a 5-7-5 syllabication pattern and could be used to help students listen for syllables, a skill often developed in reading or word study.

POETRY EXTENSIONS:

1. Poetry library in classroom

2. Poetry listening center with tapes of poets reading poetry and blank tapes so students can read and listen to their own poetry.

3. Word box - Exciting words are collected for future use in poetry writing.

4. Anthology - This is a collection of favorite poems by other poets and poems written by the students themselves.

5. Poet studies - Concentrate study on one particular poet and look for his style in each of his works.

6. Celebration of poetry - poetry reading, T-shirts, poetry bookmarks, poems in balloons and shared with others, poetry picnics and parades.

Laurie Watson

WRITING IN THE MATH CLASSROOM

BACKGROUND :

Math is probably the one academic area in which most teachers feel uncomfortable using writing. In 1989 the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics stated the teaching of mathematics can be improved by having children communicate mathematics. This can be achieved through writing and speaking about math. Teachers need to stress multiple assessments techniques, including written assignments. Writing helps students clarify their understanding and promotes mathematical discussions among students. Students need to see that writing is not just important in Language Arts, but in other areas of the curriculum.

Donald Murray in his book *Write to Learn* states "Writing is thinking." Isn't this what we want and need in math and other aspects of school - students thinking logically ?

APPLICATION :

Writing in math can be used with students at any level. Using writing is especially helpful in serving the needs of all students including LD and gifted.

PROCEDURES :

1. Introduce the new mathematical concept by reading a selection from children's literature.

2. Have students write 2 - 3 sentences about what the students already know about the concept, or about what they think the concept will involve. Share.

3. Teach the concept to the students.

4. Discuss the difference between a word problem and a math story. Show examples of student's writing. Model writing a math story based on a common experience with which all the students are familiar .

5. Have the students write original math stories.

6. Divide the class into small groups and ask them to share and solve their stories as a group.

7. Ask the students to pick one math story from each group and write , as a group, how the group solved the problem. Remind the groups to include their thought processes and feelings.

8. Have each group share their problem and how they solved the math story.

EXTENSIONS :

This lesson could be followed by "acting out" or illustrating the story problem. Writing in the math classroom can take on many forms. Here are a few suggestions :

1. Journal entries
   - summary of new material
   - individual concerns
   - double entry
2. Class log
3. Math Stories
   - original
   - rewrite problems from the book
   - write for a specified audience
4. Letters to various audiences
5. Math word webs
6. Extend graphing activities
7. Write a radio advertisement for a math process
8. Write a "How-to" book showing how to solve a type of math problem.

VI. PARTICIPANTS' WRITING

The Little Creek

by
Mark Barber

The little flow of water that ran behind our dead end street had no name. It existed, for the most part, without much attention. Well, at least the grownups gave it little attention. As for the kids on the block, the World's Fair could not have offered us more entertainment. In the summer, this refreshing little friend could be transformed into anything our playful minds created. It could become the rusty Rio Grande, that safe border for the most ruthless desperado. It rushed more fiercely than the mighty Colorado as buckskin clad frontiersmen defied her depths. When adventure was really high, that timid, unobtrusive, trickle of water snaked more deadly than the Amazon and with creatures even a hero like Frank Buck had never encountered. When imagination petered out, this cool liquid playground invited us into a world of minnows and water spiders, a veritable classroom of life where the student's eyes never left the board.

In the years I spent with the little creek, I never ventured too far down stream to know where all those dead leaves and pieces of wood sailed, nor did I explore very far up stream to discover from where it all came. Maybe that kind of stuff just wasn't important to us then; it was there, and what else really mattered?

When the weather turned cold, the little creek's pleasant chuckle was muffled under a frosted layer of ice. As we walked on its slippery belly, we stooped often to peer through the translucent, winter skin hoping to catch the slightest sign of life. Perhaps this was all done to reassure us that our shy, easy going friend had not left us but would return with the warm sun and soft breezes of spring.

Twenty years have taken me far away from my old classroom and playmate, but as old friends should, I went back to visit the little stream. It was a December day, damp and cold, with a grey sky sitting heavy above me. My discovery would prove just as dreary. The little creek no longer wandered behind that peaceful, oak strewn street. Oddly enough,

nothing had taken its place. No shopping mall, no apartment complex, none of the usual bullies that often chase away the memories of our childhood. It just simply didn't exist. What I discovered was just a soggy, old creek bed, overgrown for the most part with weeds and ugly bushes that sat buzzard-like upon her remains. What caused her death I'll never know.

The years have a way of stripping from us the layers of special moments we think will always remain. Sometimes, like old wallpaper, they slowly peel away. Other times, they are torn from us with such suddenness that we stagger at their loss. I was indignant at Time's vandalism. How dare the years wipe away MY past with such disregard?

Only in the years that followed did my experience that winter point to Time's true lesson. For someone who lived in the past, as I have for these twenty years, trying to hang on to each memory like a souvenir or scrapbook clipping is a tireless effort. Yet, embracing the past while the present slips by is a destructive one. Each pebble and floating leaf in that stream was never mine to keep; they were the trinkets and treasures that exist to make us fall in love with something much more important -- life.

Life is made up of hundreds of little streams that appear in our lives, brimming with the same magic and wonder of my little creek. They flow through our neighbourhoods, through warm handshakes, through devoted hugs, and through the sweet cries of a newborn baby. My little creek had been there at a time when I needed it most. It taught me to dream, to imagine and to discover the significance of even the smallest of life's gifts. Those lessons were not to be tucked away like some relic or family heirloom, but they were to be the instruments that prepared me for a lifetime of dreams and discoveries; a lifetime full of little creeks.

These Summer Afternoons

These days have passed so quickly
Didn't we just say hello
The warm bright sun and the songs we sang
I hate to see them go
Your smile and laughter fell like rain
Upon my open hand
Why sweet fortune chose to bless
I do not understand
But I will remember
These summer afternoons

The cards are on the table
The heart is on the sleeve
When doors have been laid open
It's easier to breathe
There's rain upon the windowsill
But a rainbow inside
Treasures to uncover
But nothing left to hide
And we will remember
These summer afternoons

You with your stories
Me with my rhyme
I believe we discovered
The other just in time

So now we part and I wish you well
Think of me now and then
You may find if memory is kind
This story has no end
When I turn these pages back again
I will do it with a sigh
And promise you then as I do now
I will never say goodbye
But I will remember
These summer afternoons

Mark Barber
1991

Fall

Sun through my window
Changes to shadow
On these walls
Anticipating
Pale moon waiting
As night falls
Light breath of smoke fans
Brown leaf-limbed strands
Of tall oak
Chimney pipe says goodbye
To amber coloured sky
Like two old folk

Summer

Summer's mouth inhales
Holds breath making the world still
Where is the exhale

Mark Barber

Red, Red, Wine

Each spring the first sight of blossoms on daddy's grapevine brought renewed interest in the brew. Made of sweet Alabama red grapes grown in my backyard along with my mama's summer supply of southern Dixie Sugar. These precious ingredients combined with tender loving care provided the best home brew a ten-year-old could ever want.

My home town was religious. Holiness, Baptist, Methodists, you name it. Sunday morning we all went to church, repented, shouted, and so forth. Come Monday morning, it was business as usual: how to harvest the grapes and make it look like the birds had done it, how to remove the sugar, cup by cup, from the sugar can without mama's noticing, and where to store twenty-five Jim Dant whiskey bottles salvaged form daddy's private garbage can. These tasks were essential to the production of our brew.

After the legwork was completed, the production began. Mark, my brother, was in charge. He made it his job to sample the brew along its journey to wineland. My job was grape mashing. My younger brother, Jeff, stirred the pot, and Joy, the baby, followed us around and whined about the ramifications of wine making. My cousin, Barney, helped Mark strain the brew and pour it into the whiskey bottles. The neighborhood boys, Dennis and Allan, packed away the finished products in boxes that were padded with wadded newspapers. Talk about cooperative learning experiences!

The task was finally completed when and only when we located a suitable storage facility. (Hopefully, that would be out of mama's sight). After a thorough search, the brew would be stored so it would "age" properly, (words of wisdom from my brother Mark who knew lots about things we weren't supposed to know about). Then the wait.

Days would pass, weeks would go away, and months would roll around and finally Mark and the other master brewers would announce that the time had come. A bottle would be retrieved from its hiding place. An assembly would be called.

Gathering in a circle, we'd all anxiously await the precious moment of truth. Our first try produced vinegar. But the second try and the attempts that followed proved to be most rewarding.

In the years that followed, we all grew up and went our separate ways. None of us picked up any nasty habits; perhaps our religious roots helped to prevent that. But, we learned to create our own kind of entertainment far from the world that we knew or understood. The memories that we all share warm our thoughts in lean times and make us smile when we are sad. I find myself missing those good times.

Donna Davis

The Sweet Taste of Corn Silks

Playing in the corn field was a delightful experience. The rows of corn made great "lanes" for running, hiding, and chasing. But the greatest thrill was the hunt for the silks. Looking for and finding just the right "blend' was an art much like baking a cake. After the hunt, we'd leave the field and quietly assemble in the basement or behind the tool shed. The tiny group would proceed to the next step: the rolling of the smokes.

There was so much to consider in the second step. The paper had to a premium brown grocery sack quality. In those days Mama saved those sacks for garbage. So any sacks we used must be lifted from behind the cook stove without notice. The paper was then torn into three inch strips. The ragged edges were a must when lighting our smoke.

Next we took out the silks and placed them flattened in front of the group. Each person would select a few strands and place them in the center of the brown paper. Not too much. Let a few silks over the edge. When we were sure the smoke was ready, we'd roll our jewel and lick the edge real good to form a seal.

Finally, the moment we had all waited for: the lighting of the smoke. Placing the smoke on our lips we'd lean forward to meet the flame. Our first drag had to be slow and meticulous because one quick draw and down the throat the flame would go. Talk about fire eaters.

Years have long passed since those days. Mama would have died had she known what we were up to. I know it was dangerous but, oh, was it fun. And were those silks sweet!

Donna Davis

WALTER

My grandfather was known in town as the "Mayor". That was because he was the first mayor when the town incorporated. Walter Harry Hardin was his name. My grandmother called him Walt. His friends called him Walter and I called him Daddy Hard'n.

Born in April of 1886 . Stories go about how he was orphaned at birth and that great-great Grandma Counts raised him using a ball fruit jar for a bottle. As a child he grew up in the wild woods of what is now North Jefferson County. No roads, so they rode horseback and played games with shotguns.

Although he only finished the third grade, Daddy Hard'n had his own education. He taught himself to read music and to play a variety of brass instruments. He later trained others to play these instruments which lead to his formation of a Ragtime Band. This band soon begin to play at many events which included brush arbors, parades, Fourth of July celebrations and Labor Day festivities. At the age of about twenty-five he began to travel by wagon and train around the South with his band. My grandmother would get enough of his absence and send my two oldest aunts by train to travel with him. Wicked is what Mama implied about him. Salty is what I remember.

He met my grandmother, Hattie, at a Baptist church meeting. Her daddy, Benjamin Franklin Hughes, a Civil War veteran, was the Pastor of the Liberty Baptist Church. They married in 1906 after my grandfather repented and joined the Baptist church. Now I don't know why my grandmother stayed with him. Perhaps his salty ways were what attracted her to him. Certainly was the attraction for me.

Anyway, Daddy Hard'n was a busy man. At the ripe old age of eleven he had begun to mine coal. Worked from dawn to dusk, six days a week. In the years followed he continued to mine. When work was scarce, he moved to Illinois. Helped the miners unionize. Said the commissary was almost communist. Smart man. Even went to Chicago to help with the union. A man of style and stature so much that at the convention he was often mistaken for Harry Truman when he wore his top hat. Back home he was still Walter, Walt and Ornry OLD Daddy Hard'n that we all grew to love.

When the mines reopened near Birmingham, my grandfather returned to his home. He had established himself as leader so it didn't come as a surprise that he was later elected as the town's first mayor. Under his leadership he brought water and electricity to the town's people. Yes, he continued to teach and direct music as well. To the delight of his neighbors he would stand on the front porch of his house every Sunday and play "Taps." He also played his favorite: "Johnny Get Your Gun."

In 1966 my saintly grandmother died. On her death bed she told my grandfather not to make a fool of himself. I remember thinking what a rotten thing to say or even think. Consequently, he lived another fifteen years and he certainly made up for any lost time with the women. A ladies' man he was and Hattie knew him best. She knew what he would he would do. Anyway, didn't matter. Didn't change my memories of him. Only added to them. I kind of liked him that way.

Dana Davis

A Memory

I still remember her sitting behind her desk, legs crossed, drinking a cup of decaff coffee. her nails were always groomed to perfection and her skin had that healthy glow of just enough sunlight. The outfit I remember her best in happened to be my dress. She looked better in it than I did, probably because the dress matched the color of her deep blue eyes.

This day was like all other days, typical. Papers to grade, fights to win, children to look after, and worlds to conquer. Only her world had already been conquered. She just didn't know it yet.

I should have realized the day was different. I woke with the pain of impending doom hanging over my head. It was unusually hot for February, and it seemed that the air had invisible straps that hindered my movements.

After dressing, I phoned my mother and checked in for the morning, and then I called her. She was going for a Saturday visit to her dentist, and I was going to a karate match with my son. Nothing strange about those plans.

Lunch was a struggle, kids were irritable, and all I wanted to do was go home.

When the phone rang, I knew the time had come. I was shocked but not surprised. The hospital was only a formality. I knew long before I arrived it was over.

In the days that followed I began to understand finality. Later I heard friends complain about their spouses and colleagues, and confide that they wished their troubles were dead. I reminded them that dead was forever. That relationships could be mended. People could be rehabilitated. Lifestyles do change. Dead meant no more papers to grade, no more fights to win, no children to look after, no worlds to conquer.

Dana Davis

THE RIVERS OF LIFE

The river was really of living water.
In my confusion it brought peace,
In my distress comfort,
For my problems answers.

The river--bring answers?
It lives and is life.

In the noise of the river I could hear the voice
Of God
Of my soul.

Leaving my rivers has never been easy.
They draw me back, yet I seldom
Return.
They are there, as they nave been,
Permanently carved deep in my spirit.
Giving life as they have forever.

My rivers flow and become one river.
the mountain stream in the Smokies
Somehow feeds the Buffalo of the west.
They join,
And I realize that they are the Jordan.
They are the Jordan of my life,
and one with the Jordan of old.

B. Dobelstein

Gramma's Boxes

Her life lay stored in shoeboxes
That lined a long high shelf.
Days are scraps that pieced together
Form a picture of herself.

There are tiny notes of joy and dreams,
Scores of pictures (pretty things),
Ideas, lists of things to do,
And notes the babies wrote in school.

Her mind, an endless fountain,
Flowed with ideas, hopes, and dreams.
Her box held hidden hopes and plans
For days that were unseen.

Life did not provide for her
An outlet for her mind,
So sheltered in those boxes
Are the treasures of her time.

B. Dobelstein

THE COMING OF THE DRAGON

It was dark inside the locker, and it smelled of rain-damp coats and boots. My nose tickled, but I couldn't sneeze. I must not be found. The dragon lady was approaching.

She was white-haired, line-faced--a tyrant who hated me! Desks in rows, detention chart at the back--she seemed to lie in waiting to catch anyone and punish all.

Hour after hour our workbooks sat before us. I remember nothing I learned--except the fear.

Only days before I had returned from lunch in the sunny breakfast room of my house (We were allowed to leave for lunch) and taken my place in the row of wooden desks. As the white-haired lady stepped into the room, one child's voice was heard. All of us were marched to the chart in the rear of the room and made to inflict punishment on ourselves.

Home--I could see it out the window, across the playground, and through the brightly colored leaves on the trees. As I marked on the chart, home receded, got farther and farther away. I knew that my name on the chart meant more hours in the dreary oppressive room of the dragon lady.

School became a prison and home a distant goal--a paradise lost. I wept until there were no tears. Grown-ups don't believe in dragons, so my fears and tears were ignored. "A stage," I was told. My only hope lay in the locker. If only I could wait undiscovered until I heard the dragon's fire, I could avoid the line at the rear of the room and hope. I could wait and hope for the final moment when I could sail across the playground, wade through the colored leaves, and reach paradise. There I'd find release, for the queen who did not believe in dragons waited with butter bread and cakes.

B. DOBELSTEIN

MAPLEBERRY MAGIC

But in a jar put up by Felicity,
The summer which maybe never was
Has been captured and preserved.
And when we unscrew the lid
And slice off a piece
And let it linger on our tongues:
Unicorns become possible again.
(from "Reflections on a
Gift of Watermelon
Pickle" by John Tobias)

School got out for the summer yesterday--my kids cried. I almost cried too when I thought of facing the summer with two very unhappy children who need to be entertained. Maybe those who advocate year-round classes for public schools are right. After all, the children love school; they are happy and secure there, and it's a very stimulating place. Maybe--but no, I looked up to notice that my two small ones were nowhere to be found. I walked outside and heard immediately the sounds of childish laughter. The sprinkler next door had been turned on, and my children, along with others from the neighborhood, had joyously gathered to celebrate.

As my neighbor and I visited, it seemed that the children lost interest in the water play and moved on to play on the gym set. Ever mindful of economy, we called to the children to turn off the water before leaving it. Then came the shock. These children who had been in tears over the end of school, these who had worked so hard for good grades, whose work had matured until we were convinced that babyhood was behind us, cried, "We aren't through. That's the royal ball and we have to travel there. This is our magic coach." So the see-saw and swings lifted them higher and higher into the world of their dreams. Summer had arrived, imaginations had awakened, and childhood lived on.

Days have followed days, and the summer has been one new world after another. The clubhouse has been a treehouse on a desert island where imaginary crawdads have been hunted for sustenance. The tent made of sheets, filling half the bedroom, was the great outdoors for a whole week. Even I was drawn into their world as I reached in to say goodnight. Dolls of every shape and kind and a myriad of stuffed animals adorned the sides. Each had been tucked in, and it was storytime. All listened attentively, and I could smell the campfire and see

the stars just as my little ones could.

The rush of freshness that blew into our lives was astonishing. Each of their senses reached out for stimulation, as if long dulled and now fearing to miss a single part of the season. Each new sight, sound, and smell brought new ideas. I received endless complimentary tickets to the "backyard theater" where I saw familiar beings transformed into storybook characters. I met Mickey and Minnie, the Emperor (new clothes and all), and even two new characters--poor orphan girls born in my very own yard. There were lightning bugs to bottle for free energy in nightlights and flowers that were magically changing to luscious berries just right for tea parties.

What school had restricted for months was unleashed full force. Funny, the teachers had worked so hard to bring out creativity, and here it flowed naturally like the nearby stream after rain.

I thought (I really did) that my kids were too old for this magic. I thought that my children had found more profitable activities with which to occupy themselves. This seemed so strange. Maybe I had gotten used to the routine of school. This year my daughter had been assigned so much homework that after a short break and snack it was right to work. We could have made a bit more playtime by cutting out piano and ballet, but she consistently refused. With maternal concern I had watched and decided that playtime did not seem particularly valuable to her. She generally filled free moments by watching TV, reading, and resting--then. Not now. It is summer; the air is hot and heavy, and though the heat is stifling to me it seems to ignite their imaginations and provide them a freedom that adults have long forgotten.

How sad! Children are innately rich in wonder, creativity, and confidence. All too often, in the cold, rigid environment of the traditional drill/skill classroom, we take these gifts and bind them up. We tell the children that these precious tools that helped them learn for their pre-school years are now of no practical use. Then we worry because we can't motivate children to learn. Most adults would have a hard time finding motivation to fill in the blanks of ten or fifteen workbook pages each day.

I began to question my own ideas about teaching. I had taught secondary English before I took some time off to watch my children grow. Could it be that if we fill our schoolrooms with the warmth and freedom of summer, children will be naturally drawn to learning? We would not need, then, to spend time and effort motivating children,
for they would be self-motivated. They would want to know, and we could spend our time teaching and guiding students into learning.

If I allow my students to choose writing topics and forms,

and if I allow time and encouragement for them to work, will they bring me theater tickets? Will the writing they do become a work of art which they will want to invite others to enjoy? It all makes sense. If I respect the abilities of my students, provide the time and place, they will perform. Yes, they will learn.

Every day, at least once, my youngest runs in to ask if the "mapleberries" are ready yet. (The berries are really elderberries, but he invents his own designations when memory fails.) He never forgets how delicious those berries are, and how he loves jelly spread thick on peanut butter bread. He is on constant guard lest the birds eat his berries. One of his main goals this summer is to make "mapleberry jelly." It is as if he could in that act preserve this magic and make it last all year.

In my heart the idea began to grow. I began to look for other teachers with similar ideas; I began to read and learn. I want to make the "mapleberry jelly" and take summer into my classroom. When the coldness of winter begins to creep back into my room, I will open my jar and taste summer again. Then, I can stand against the elements firmly convinced that my classroom will be a place where freedom, creativity, and knowledge flourish, and where children, like "mapleberries," grow all year.

by Rebecca B. Dobelstein

THE DINNER
By Don Garrett

Earl Ray squirmed as he sat around the table in the hard metal chair. It felt cold against his bare legs.

He thought he'd remembered telling his mother how cold the chairs were, but she must have decided that fashion was more important than comfort.

Sitting beside Earl Ray was his Aunt Georgia Lou. She was a big woman with eyes that bulged slightly behind her cat-eyed glasses. Her hair was teased and stood up like she'd just been frightened. Aunt Georgia Lou was very dramatic and animated whenever she talked. Earl Ray liked the way her upper arms flapped when she told ghost stories, or stories about the family living off of cereal samples during the depression.

Uncle J. D. sat slumped beside Aunt Georgia Lou. He didn't talk much. As a matter of fact he didn't move much either. He'd been afflicted by a heat stroke last summer while picking tomatoes from his garden. Uncle J. D. usually remained in a stupor, although occasionally he'd emit a slight moan, and if he got real excited he might wheeze and drool from the corner of his mouth.

Grandmother Lewis sat on the other side of Uncle J. D. She had piercing gray eyes and a disposition to match. Most of her days were spent complaining and accusing people of things they didn't do. Once she accused Earl Ray of stealing her "priceless antique broach," but he knew that she'd sold it the day before in a yard sale and forgotten.

Earl Ray's father and mother completed the circle around the table. They were hardworking, good folks, but not very interesting. Whenever either of them began to tell a story the room would clear.

"Will you ask the blessing Lester?" Aunt Georgia Lou asked as she swatted a fly away from the sweet potato pie.

Everybody simultaneously bowed their heads as if someone had ordered them to do so.

"Dear Lord bless this food to the nourishment of our bodies, amen."

Earl Ray wondered why his father always said the same blessing. "God probably doesn't listen anymore," he thought. "He's probably up there rolling his eyes from boredom."

As the food began to make its way around the table, Earl Ray's mother put a small portion of each carefully prepared dish onto his plate. He asked her to make a bird's nest with his mashed potatoes and English peas.

"Georgia Lou...I mean this roast is tender!" exclaimed Grandmother Lewis. "It's like chewing on a cloud!"

Earl Ray wondered when she had ever chewed on a cloud.

"I got to the market early and picked over all the new deliveries," Aunt Georgia Lou proclaimed as pieces of biscuit flew from her mouth.

"The corn is right tastey too," added Earl Ray's father.

"I just added some corn starch to the water and it thickened up real pretty," munched Georgia Lou as a kernel of corn rested on her chin.

Earl Ray, bored with the conversation, was mashing his fork into his potatoes.

Before he knew it though, his mother slapped his bare leg.

"Stop that boy!" she cried. "Where are your manners?"

Earl Ray dropped his head in embarrassment.

"That was a mighty fine sermon today," Lester replied as if nothing had happened.

"A bit long if you ask me," snapped Grandmother Lewis. "I think that we were in that church longer than the Hebrews wandered in the desert!"

Earl Ray's mother shook her head in silent disapproval. Uncle J.D. wheezed a little. Earl Ray thought that he saw Aunt Georgia Lou wipe drool from his mouth as she spoon fed him.

Lester piled more food onto his plate and burped loudly, "Some folks need a good long preaching to!"

Grandmother Lewis, swallowing a mouthful of meat, pointed a long boney finger at Lester.

"And some people need to know when to shut up!"

Lester ignored her sharp comment as he shoveled food into his mouth.

The pesky fly continued to buzz around the table, dodging Aunt Georgia Lou's swatting. Earl Ray leaned back in his chair and began counting the dots on the ceiling. That's what he felt like sometimes...a dot on the ceiling.

"Earl Ray sit at the table proper, or do without dessert," screamed his mother.

He eased the chair onto the floor giving a heavy sigh.

Grandmother Lewis winked at Earl Ray and began to quiz him on his Sunday school lesson. He hated Sunday school. He'd often wondered how many times a human being could possibly sit still through the tellings and retellings of Baby Moses in the bulrushes or Noah and the great flood.

"Well, speak up boy," she urged. "What did you learn in Sunday school today?"

Earl Ray thought a minute. He'd learned that if you mix blue and green play-doh together it'll turn pea green. He'd learned that Mrs. Sharp, his teacher, wore a black girdle...the kind he'd seen in that girlie magazine in the woods. He caught a glimpse of it as she squatted onto a child-sized chair. He'd learned that Mary Jo Cate's father couldn't attend church today on account that he got drunk and had to sleep in the barn last night. But none of these answers seemed fitting enough for his Grandmother Lewis to hear so he just smiled and gave his usual answer.

"I learned about God's love."

Grandmother Lewis wiped the gravy from her lips and exclaimed, "It's important for a boy to have the right upbringing. There are too many evil things out there in this world. If you teach a child right, he'll remember it the rest of his life! He'll live right!"

Aunt Georgia Lou listened intently to Grandmother Lewis' sermonette and added while waving her fork, "The most important thing is to show a child love and affection."

Grandmother Lewis didn't appreciate the way Aunt Georgia Lou had contradicted her. "What do you know about raising youngins?" she forcefully asked. " You're as barren as a beehive!"

Aunt Georgia Lou's glasses began to fog. The two of them began to argue about who knew the most about what. Earl Ray didn't like the way the conversation had turned and tried to change the subject.

"I can count to 500," he cried, hoping that someone would hear him.

"Hush up," snapped Grandmother Lewis as she continued to chastise Aunt Georgia Lou. "Younguns are to be seen and not heard!"

Earl Ray slid down into his chair trying to fight off the tears. He looked up at the ceiling and began counting the dots again.

Lester belched and stuck his hand into the top of his his pants. Earl Ray's mother pulled his chair closer to the table and told him to eat. The fly landed on the butter, but Aunt Georgia Lou ignored it.

THE HOSPITAL VISIT [1]

By Don Garrett

"You're doing fine Mrs. Adams," exclaimed the nurse, all pressed in a white cotton dress. "You're getting to be a pro at this!"

Eloise tried to give a polite chuckle, but her throat was still sore from the tube. "After four back operations I oughta be," she said.

The nurse opened the drapes revealing a blinding sun. "You've got some people waiting to see you if you're up to it."

Eloise was up to it. It had been quite a while since she'd seen her daughter and son-in-law. And she wouldn't mind a visit from her husband, even though he had been there only a few hours earlier. These hospital stays were becoming a habit, and having your loved ones around made it easier to tolerate the pain.

Eloise grabbed the small compact from her bedside table and ran an arthritic hand through her salt and pepper hair. "I believe a visit would be nice," she said.

The nurse lifted the head of Eloise's bed, adjusted the I. V. tubes and pulled back the heavy wooden door, leaving it ajar as she left.

Eloise lifted her head from her pillow, straining her neck to peer around the doorway. She heard a sound.

She'd heard that sound before. She wanted to dismiss it as something else, but her worst fear was realized. It was Cousin Lois and her husband Mack.

Cousin Lois always had some kind of an ailment and hers was always worse than anyone elses. She'd recently had her third brain hemorrhage which left her slightly paralyzed. Cousin Lois was too impatient for a wheel chair so she rode on a motorized cart which hummed while in motion.

As the humming got louder she burst through the room. "Hey, Eloise...you look so good!" Cousin Lois maneuvered the cart to the head of the bed. "Oh, I pity you so much...I know how awful these hospital stays are...you know I've had my share of them."

"Yes, you have," Eloise replied politely.

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[1] The author does not wish to offend, but rather to show the ugliness of man through humor.

Cousin Lois ignored her reply and continued, " You know, Eloise, I have had it so rough, but I took eighteen steps the other day...it wasn't easy, but I said that I was going to do it and I did!"

Eloise smiled, "Well I declare."

Cousin Lois turned her cart and looked up at Mack. "Tell her, Mack ...tell Eloise how many steps I took."

Mack grinned and reconfirmed the eighteen steps.

Cousin Lois turned back towards Eloise. "You know we can't all be as fortunate...Oueida's got sugar you know and she's had the worst time with her feet."

Eloise's head began to hurt.

"You know they might have to cut her foot off...the doctors took veins out of her leg and tried to plant them in her foot, but it didn't do any good...her foot died anyway."

Eloise tried to concentrate on the crucifix behind Cousin Lois's head.

Cousin Lois laughed. She always laughed before she changed the subject.

"You know Mack and me just got back from my family reunion and we had the best time!"

Mack interupted, "Yea, we found a few coons in her tree!"

Cousin Lois didn't even look at Mack. "You didn't find any coons in my family...I'm French!"

Mack continued to agitate. "Those French people are bad about gettin with the blacks."

"My people left France and went over to England...there aren't any blacks in England!"

Mack laughed hysterically, "Oh I'm just pullin your leg!"

Eloise shifted in her bed.

"Eloise, do you see what I have to put up with?" sighed Cousin Lois.

Eloise wasn't listening.

"Well, we don't need to keep you... we know you need your rest," said Cousin Lois as she rolled to the window to admire the flowers. She carefully looked over every bouquet and arrangement, giving her approval of each florist's choice of flowers. Mack stood against the wall jingling the change in his pockets. Eloise couldn't decide which was more irritating, his jingling or Cousin Lois's incessant talking.

"I can't quite read the cards on these here flowers," said Cousin Lois as she strained to decipher each inscription.

Eloise knew what was coming next.

"You know," said Cousin Lois, spinning her cart around to face Eloise. "I had cataract surgery and my eyes aren't as good as they used to be...Oh Lord, I thought I was going blind, but you know they can do wonders with the eye now. I'm just thankful that the Lord saw fit to let me keep my vision."

Eloise nodded.

"Mack, tell Eloise what a time I had with that operation."

"Oh, she had a time," he said.

"But you know...the worst operation that I ever had was that hysterectomy when the doctors tore my bladder." Cousin Lois lowered her voice to a whisper. "You know I had to wear those adult diapers until they patched up the hole."

The pain in Eloise's head moved down into her neck. The air seemed to thicken.

"It's so strange how some of us are afflicted so," she sighed. "Some folks don't know how blessed they are."

Eloise began to speak, but Cousin Lois continued. "I'm not complaining mind you...I know I could be a lot worse off."

Eloise shook her head in agreement.

"Well let us get outta here so you can get your rest...I know how tiring those operations can be."

Cousin Lois steered her cart cart towards the door and Mack followed. "Now Eloise, don't you let company keep you from your rest...Lord, you just don't know how tiring visitors can be...If you need me, you just call...that's what family is for!"

Eloise forcefully smiled and said, "Keep in touch."

As she rolled from the room Cousin Lois's voice echoed through the hall. "Oh, I'll try, but you no how it goes...some of us are so afflicted!"

The Boy Next Door

He is bright. He is funny. He is cute. He is a child trying to be a man. He is intelligent and witty. He is an accident waiting to happen. He is Nathan.

Nathan is a thirteen year old boy who lives next door to us. He is usually very outgoing, but can be shy at times. Nathan rides to school with us everyday and has become as dear to me as if he were my own son. Really, he's like the son I never had.

My days usually start with his shining face at my front door. I motion for him to come in. With his boundless energy, he charges up the stairs, deposits books and gym bag on the floor, and plops his body onto a kitchen chair. As I finish gathering my things and put the finishing touches to my hair, I hear good natured fussing and teasing in the kitchen. Michelle and Nathan are at it again! After settling the issue of who gets to sit in the front seat, off we go.

Nathan and our youngest daughter are in the same grade in school. They often see each other in classes and in the halls. He is very athletic and plays football, basketball, baseball, and is on the golf team. She is a dancer, beauty queen and head cheerleader. I suppose the only thing they really have in common is that they usually succeed in anything they try. They can be best friends, worst of enemies, and accomplices in mischief. But, no matter what, the one thing that holds them together is that they are neighbors.

This young man, who only came into our lives eighteen months ago, has helped me so much in the understanding of young boys and their need for constantly being on the go. They are always curious, with a never ending quest for knowledge. How could I have been a good teacher when I didn't really have a clear understanding of half my class?

At the end of a vacation, or a trip away from home, when the thrill of the adventures is over and the trip home has begun, my mind reviews all the jobs at home that were left undone. A simple thought acts like a beacon in a storm; it's Nathan. He will be glad to see us. Nathan will be happy that we're home. Nothing fills my heart like knowing that Nathan will be the one with the shining face that will come bounding across the yard or down the street exclaiming, "The Hoffmanns are home, the Hoffmanns are home!"

This young man will be many things to many people in his life. I'm sure he'll make us all very proud of him. But will the boy next door ever know how much he brightens my days? Maybe someday I'll find a way to tell him.

July 1991
JoAnne Hoffmann

THE GOLD PIN

It's only a small pin,
As simple as simple can be.
Mrs. Baker and her husband,
Picked it out...
Just for me!!

They waited and planned,
For the perfect time and place,
To bestow this little trinket,
For a graduate's embrace.

It has stayed with me forever,
Never worn much anymore,
But every time I look at it,
It warms me to the core.

I know the care that went into finding it,
And the love they had for me.
It came from that little couple,
Who always sat on pew number 3.

BY: JoAnne Hoffmann
August 1, 1991

College: First Look

By: JoAnne Hoffmann

College can be many things for many people, but nothing short of wonderful for a seventeen year old recent graduate. Such was the case for my daughter Kimberly.

Kimberly, who prefers to be called Kim, is a bright, pretty girl, whose favorite pastime was not school. School was never her thing. As a matter of fact, there were times that the thought of her not going on to college came into serious consideration. Our problems stemmed from the fact that Kim was never a good student, and there were more than a few times that grades became a major issue between us. Grades weren't important to her, and although we kept stressing their importance, she did not find them a necessary part of her master plan. Master plan or not, she had that wonderful little piece of paper which said that Kimberly Lynn Hoffmann was a high school graduate.

The big day of Kim's high school graduation came, and we were all so proud of her. There she was in her beautiful white dress, scarlet cap, gown, and glowing smile. As parents, this was the day we had dreamed about for years. Walking triumphantly across the emerald green carpet of grass that covered the school's stadium, Kim was fulfilling not only our life long hopes but as she put it, being released from life's personal prison.

Once the excitement of graduation had worn off, in set the thrill of college and moving into the dorm. For Kim, this became a time of excitement as well as of desperately trying to become an adult.

Finally, the big day came. FRESHMAN ORIENTATION !!! Kim and her father got up early and drove up to the college campus. It's not certain who was more excited, Kim or Gary. They eagerly entered the building in which the orientation and tour would begin.

The orientation process began with the signing of the dorm contract. She had gotten her first choice, Sparkman Hall, and was thrilled with the prospect of having a place of her own. At least, one that was away from Mama.

Next, came the campus tour. This was guided by Stacy, Kim's appointed peer counselor. They walked to the campus bookstore, student center and mail center. This illustrious group must have closely resembled the mama duck from the

book Make Way for Ducklings, escorting her newly hatched ducklings across the busy street. By the time she rejoined her father, she had acquired enough knowledge to enable her to project an air of confidence.

After a delicious lunch in the school cafeteria, off she went with her faculty mentor to work on setting up a reasonable schedule. An hour later, penciled in schedule in hand, off they went to the library for the most important lesson of all, finding their way around. What an awe inspiring experience for this child who had simply relied on Mother for all her research work.

Once the technical business was taken care of, everyone tramped back to their assigned rooms and preparations for the evening's dinner and dance. Oh boy, the first real chance to mingle with boys!!! The evening, although not as successful as hoped, was not a total waste. Kim emerged with phone numbers of several prospective roommates, and had been asked for her phone number by two semi-lame, three moderately cute, and one almost gorgeous specimen of the opposite sex. On the whole not too shabby an evening.

As Kim got ready for bed, she mulled over the experiences of the day. She wondered if this was going to be as easy as she had thought. This whole thing might take just a little more effort than she had originally planned!

THE OLD BUTTON PICTURE

by: JoAnne Hoffmann

Yesterday I found a box. A box full of treasures... a box full of beautiful worn buttons. How strange, I couldn't let it go. My family told me just to throw it away, that it wasn't worth anything. But somehow there was a pleasant feel to it, a kind of rightness, just holding all these buttons, old and worn, some broken or with threads still hanging from their shanks. Threads that had once held it to precious little garments, such as the little white buttons that had held Kim's tiny gown together on her trip home from the hospital, or the smooth pink one that I recognized as being on a pinafore that I loved so well. How could I possibly let such treasures be put to waste?

After much thought I decided to display this collection for all to see. A small wooden frame was retrieved from the attic. It had once held a picture from my nursery and was worn and pitted with age. With a little polish this would serve admirably as a home for these small treasures.

The buttons were placed in what I considered a random order, but somehow they came together to form a beautiful blend of texture, style, and color. As I surveyed my work, memories flooded my mind. Tucked away in the corner were pale blue buttons that my cousin Marilyn had worn on her birthday dress. She had been seven years old at the time and loved that dress more than anything. I still remember how mad she had gotten at Jimmy T. for tripping her and causing a dirty smudge on the beautiful little dress. I wonder when those buttons had been clipped from that blue organdy dress?

Just down from the small blue buttons is a big rough speckled gray disk. One of four that had held my Sunday coat together. My mind wanders back to the long afternoon drives that Dad always took after lunch on Sunday. Marilyn and I occupied our time by playing with the furry balls that hung on strings from the neck of our matching coats. Those kittens, as our imagination called them, would keep us happy and contented on those long drives in the country that Daddy loved so much. With a chuckle I recall how Daddy would remark loudly, just as he saw us slipping into a little doze, "Look at the cows!" Suddenly we snapped up with eager faces, looking wildly around for the cows, leaving any notions of a nap far behind. Funny, that old trick still works! My own children still fall for it today!

My glance moves slowly over this unlikely collections of small and large fasteners and views not just buttons, but bits and pieces of the past. How strange it seems to find such comfort in a simple display of bits and pieces of molded plastic and wood. It takes so little to trigger the little things that has made life meaningful to me. Pearl buttons from my wedding dress, small pink shells that adorned Kim's christening gown, lavender crystals that once shimmered on Michelle's first party dress, all taking their place in this memory crown.

My family says they're not worth anything. They're most certainly wrong. For this picture is worth more than anyone could ever pay.

Buttons of many shapes, style, color,and sizes...
Memories, memories, big and small,
Painful and pleasant,
We've shared them all.

The Naming of Children
(With Apologies to T. S. Eliot)

When prospective parents first learn they are going to have a baby, they are consumed with many fears and concerns. Frequently, one of the most consuming concerns is, " What shall we name the baby?"

As I awaited the birth of my first child, I gave a great deal of thought to appropriate names. My attention centered on boys' names; I was strangely certain that this baby was a boy. I didn't want my son to be called Junior or Sonny, but I was in favor of naming him after his father. My husband is called by his middle name, Gregory, so there was a perfectly good first name going to waste. Greg, however, hates his first name, so he didn't want a namesake. I wanted a really strong name for my boy. I also wanted to honor my father, whom I love dearly and who has a lovely, strong name, Charles. What about Charles Gregory --- a name that had the right sound and that would represent the two men in my life. Greg and I were thrilled with our beautiful choice, and we were also determined about one thing: this baby would be called Charles. We had struggled to find just the right name, and we vowed not to sanction any corruption of that name.

Our son entered the world on September 8, 1976, and we proudly had his full name recorded on his birth certificate, Charles Gregory Jeane. As we had vowed, we, along with all of the relatives and friends, called him Charles. We were true to our promise --- at least we were true for about nine months.

By the time Charles was about nine months old, he had truly begun to demonstrate his sunny personality. This kid smiled all the time. How could we call a tiny person with an enormous smile Charles? Charlie says smile. Soon Charlie had more than crept into our vocabularies; it had conquered them. Sometimes he smiled so big that we even gave that particular smile a name, the Charlie Chan. We could actually say to this delightful miniature person, "Give us a Charlie Chan!" and he would perform on cue, producing his trademark grin.

Charles became Charlie and stayed that way until he entered kindergarten. I registered him for school and indicated his nickname on the card. I was certain he was Charlie, and I thought he was certain he was Charlie. His kindergarten teacher, however, when she called his name, must have seen something in his expression which I had missed. She stopped the roll call, looked at him very carefully, and patiently asked, "Would you rather be called Charles or Charlie?"

The young man, totally oblivious to the other youngsters still waiting to be acknowledged by their teacher, pondered this extremely important querie. Finally, he answered gravely, "Charles will be just fine, I believe." Charles had returned!

For the next eight years, Charles Jeane lived with us. He was still as delightful as he had been as Charlie, but a shy, reserved Charles presented himself to the outside world. Although at home I could see a tremendously funny personality emerging, in public he was painfully shy. Secretly, I had begun to think it was fortunate we had chosen a strong name to help support him.

When Charles was thirteen, a time that is supposed to be traumatic for adolescents, something wonderful occurred. An incredibly witty, confident young man suddenly emerged from his shy shell. He could make me laugh in almost any situation, and, apparently, he could make others laugh, too, because he suddenly was totally involved with people. He was busy all the time, going to the tennis courts, going to the show, going to the beach, going everywhere. Then the phone began to ring! When I would answer, young, eager female voices would ask, "Is Chuck home?"

Chuck! I almost choked. Why did these girls think they could call him Chuck? I was appalled. Chuck!!! Imagine how I felt when he announced to the family that he wanted to be called Chuck.

My man-child is almost fifteen now. He is six feet tall, very clever, very confident, very charming and very Chuck. Charles, Charlie, Charles, Chuck Jeane. Oh, well, a greater writer than I has already asked, "What's in a name?" Maybe new parents should concentrate on one of those other consuming fears.

Karen Jeane

Humble Pie

Raising a child is a truly humbling experience. I had thought that being a mother with two college degrees, not to mention years of life experience, would somehow make me superior in intellect to my children. My second child has taught me otherwise over the years.

Lauren Cabra Jeane was very different from her brother. My first child was always calm- while I carried him, at birth, and after. Lauren, however, tap danced through her pre-birth days, presented herself in the breech position, and cried over everything for the first two years of her life. Because my first child was so docile, I was confident that parenting was, and would continue to be, a breeze.Suddenly, God had zapped me with a child who wouldn't even let me burp her unless she chose the position. Where did she come from? My husband is a kind, gentle man, never given to fits of temper or demands for attention. I have always wanted to please; a stern look from my parents was all it took to discipline me. Surely, with two sterling personalities such as ours, we could mold and tame this little child!

By the time Lauren was three, she had clearly exhibited a strong, determined personality. Her father and I sat her down one day to try to explain to her that there was an easier way to live her life (easier for us, of course). In a three-year-old's terms, we explained to her that she wouldn't get hurt as often if she could learn to do it Mommy and Daddy's way; she wouldn't get in trouble as often if she could learn to do it Mommy and Daddy's way; she wouldn't be punished as often if she could learn to do it Mommy and Daddy's way. After giving her what we were sure were sufficient examples of doing it the easy way, we sat back and looked at her expectantly. Without a moment's hesitation, she nodded her head wisely and responded, "I know, but I'm going to do it my way."

The second example of her clever independence came later that same year. Because I sponsored an active service club at school, it became necessary for me to leave home for a weekend to attend a convention. On Friday at school I gave a very thorough literature test and, of course, brought the students' test papers home with me. I put them on the seat of the hall tree when I got home, gathered my belongings for the weekend, bid my family good-bye, and went conventioning. I didn't get home until Sunday evening, having given no thought or attention to the tests.

Monday morning I scurried around as usual to get ready to leave for school. I went to the hall tree to collect the test papers, but there were no tests there. I looked around in a cursory manner, but I really wasn't concerned. In fact, I convinced myself that I hadn't even brought the papers home because I knew that I would be gone all weekend.

Although I expected to find three stacks of tests on my desk at school, there were none there. I began to experience a mild sense of panic. I virtually

tore my classroom apart searching for the missing papers, but I had no success. I walked all over the building looking in any spot I might have laid them down, but still no papers. Surely they must be at home.

That afternoon I searched wildly throughout my house. I looked in every conceivable spot in which I might have put them. I even looked in some inconceivable spots! Those illusive papers were not to be found. I would have to announce to my students that I had misplaced their tests, and they would have to take a new test.

The night before the students were to be retested, as they were presumably at home studying diligently, I got up from the dinner table, turned around, and gasped. There on the seat of the hall tree, exactly where I had put them, were the missing papers. Now I knew that the culprit had to be one of my children.

I whirled back around to the table, glared at the kids, and demanded, "Which one of you had them?"

Lauren got the most mischievous look on her face I had ever seen, and her smile said it all. She just wanted to let Mommy know, in her own clever way, that she really didn't want her Mommy to go away.

Another example of Lauren's unique ingenuity was the shoe caper, which occurred in the fall of the next year. Lauren inherited one thing from me: a shoe fetish. When her brother got some new school shoes, she wanted new shoes too. On Saturday morning she came into the den barefooted, climbed up in my lap, and said, "Mommy, I want a new pair of shoes like Charles got."

I patiently explained to her that we didn't get shoes simply because we wanted them, but because we needed them. She assured me, with a serious look in her big blue eyes, that she needed some. Having bought her shoes only three weeks earlier, I knew she didn't need them. I maintained that her shoes were just fine. She maintained in her most persuasive tone that they weren't. After several minutes of similar exchanges, I thought I had hit upon a fool-proof method of resolving the stalemate.

"You go up and put on your shoes, and we'll go to see Mr. Hand. If he says that you need new shoes, we'll get some."

Mr. Hand was the man from whom we purchased all the children's shoes. He was a marvelous fitter of children's feet, and he was almost painfully honest. One time my father had tried desperately to buy a pair of shoes from Mr. Hand for my son to wear for Easter. They were the only pair of this particular shoe left, and the child's toes were right at the end. Although my father can usually be very persuasive, Mr. Hand would not sell the shoes to him because my son would have gotten only a few weeks' wear from them. I knew that he would never say Lauren needed more new shoes.

Lauren gave me a big smile and went upstairs to put on her shoes. In a few minutes we were off to the mall to see Mr. Hand. It was a lovely October

morning, the first chilly one we had had, and I felt great--- about the weather and about my handling of the shoe situation. My smug attitude did not last long.

As we arrived at the mall, I opened the car door and held the seat up so that Lauren could climb out. As her sturdy little leg came into view, I looked down at her feet for the first time. I had told her to put on her shoes, and she had. I had failed to specify *which* shoes. She had put on her sandals from the summer before last, and her little toes were hanging off the end of the shoes. Of course Mr. Hand said she needed new shoes! A deal's a deal; she got some.

It has taken me many years, but I have finally realized that I don't want or need to mold or tame this child. Rather, I find delight in her. She is kind and gentle like her father, but she is also strong and definite about who she is and what she wants. She also wants to please as her mother does, but she will not compromise her standards or agree to something in which she doesn't believe. Of course she doesn't want to do it Mommy and Daddy's way! She is her own person, and that person is a bubbly, clever charmer who has taught her mother some very valuable lessons.

Karen Jeane

Recreation

The word recreation usually suggests playing. It brings to mind free time. One of my favorite times of recreation is my time at the beach. Going to the beach is a play time, and it is free time for me. More important, though, it is a time of re-creation, a time when the very essence of my being is renewed.

I am able to play at the beach because I go there with my two best female friends. As I have grown older, I have realized the truth in the saying that we may have many acquaintances, but a true friend is a rare treasure. My beach buddies are my treasures. I am secure in the knowledge that I am loved and accepted for me; they will take me just as I am, but they will also glory with me in growth. They encourage me to expand my horizons, to stretch in any new direction, but they affirm me even when I am resistant to growth. Because we are all educators, beach time is usually one long inservice, but if I am tired of learning, I can play as long and as frivolously as I please.

The beach is also freedom to me. My week at the beach frees me from all responsibility. I am not a mother, a wife, a daughter, a teacher, or a neighbor at the beach. I am free to be Karen. There is never a need to do anything I don't want to do. I can read, walk, think, sit and stare, eat, drink, shop, laugh, cry, be a reasoning adult or a capricious child--- anything I want, anytime I want, only at my own whim. I never feel responsible to anybody or for anybody. I am free to be as productive or as lazy as I choose to be, and I never have to fear letting anyone down or disappointing anyone or pleasing anyone.

As soon as I walk out onto the porch of the beach house and see the sparkling blue water, I can feel my shoulders begin to relax. My breathing becomes deeper, and the tension seeps out of every part of my being. The powerful sound of the surf and the ever-changing constancy of the sea lull me into a sense of well-being that I don't experience anywhere else. Daily walks along the beach at the water's edge free me to commune to the depths of my soul with my Creator. A God who gave us something as vast, something as powerful, something as beautiful as the ocean must surely love us. If God is powerful enough to create and control the oceans, He can control and order me. Thus, I am free to tell Him every fear, ask Him for every help, thank Him for every generous gift. I am free to love Him with my entire being, and I am confident of His love for me.

The ocean invites me every year to come out and play, and my best friends are my playmates. It flows freely, and I am assured that each year, when I return to my ocean, it will encourage me to flow freely as well, returning me to the realities of life a stronger, healthier, happier person. I am truly recreated.

Karen Jeane

SOME ENCHANTED EVENING

"Come on, Robin, it'll be fun" he would say every time I saw him, "I promise if you'll go out with me just once and have anything less than a spectacular time, I will leave you alone forever."

"What a deal," I would laugh. That was one thing about Joe Leberte, he could always make me laugh. He could always make me laugh, and he was always there. "There" being anywhere I happened to be. He was around every corner and behind every shrub of the small college campus we both attended in the spring of 1985. Tonight was no different; there he was playing the drums beside the stage where the spring musical was being performed. I couldn't help but smile as he tipped his drumstick at me with a flourish as I entered the auditorium.

"Definitely, not my type," I thought as I sat down and glanced at the cover of the program which read SOME ENCHANTED EVENING. How appropriate. Since my long time boyfriend had jilted me to pursue "interests of which I couldn't possibly compete" a few weeks earlier, I felt like a bird uncaged. I dated every boy who asked me, as long as they fit my recently updated criteria: tall, athletic, extremely good looking , and absolutely no doubts about their sexuality. Intellect was optional as was sense of humor and good breeding. My previous boyfriend had injured my pride and nothing soothed injured pride better than being on the arm of a good looking man.

This Joe character, however, did not fit neatly into my plans. I came to this play to be seen by my former looking radiantly happy. Unfortunately, there weren't any guys at this play who could play victim to my practiced charm. I should have known this wouldn't be a draw for the type of guys I was currently interested in.

I watched the play, but my mind was focused on the play going on inside my head. How could I have been so stupid as to think that any suitable guy would be here tonight? This was terrible! Now instead of appearing deliriously happy and contented with myself, I was going to look like I didn't have a date and perhaps worse than that, like I wanted my former boyfriend back. Panic quickly swept up my backbone as I

contemplated how I was going to get out of this mess. My eyes settled on the drummer beside the stage.

That's it! Of course, Joe will be his usual flirtatious self, and I'll go along with it. Even though he's not exactly the type I would prefer, it's the only way out of this. The lights came up for intermission and true to my predictions, Joe was at my side immediately with his same line, "You've got to go out with me after the show, we'll paint the town red, it will be terrific!" he said.

"Oh really," I smiled as I saw my ex out of the corner of my eye.

He must have caught my glance because what he said next pushed all the right buttons "There's going to be a party after the show, do you want to go?"

"Sure, that will be great," I heard myself saying, even as the voice in the back of my head was saying, "Aren't you going a little far to make some gay guy jealous???"

"Oh well, what's one date?," I thought, "At least he will leave me alone after this." The next thing I knew I was in a night club listening to a band called JOE CERAVALO AND NIGHT LIFE. There was no party at all, just Joe and I. He had looked me straight in the eye and lied as cooly as an accomplished con man. Apparently, I wasn't the only one who liked to play games with people. The incredible part was that I didn't really mind. It was rather pleasant to go out with a man who's main concern was to make me happy. He wasn't doing too badly either.

Then it happened, the band started playing the old Sam Cooke song YOU SEND ME. Joe asked me to dance and took my hand and led me to the dance floor. He gently placed his hand at the small of my back, and I instinctively relaxed. This was different from the way most boys immediately crushed me to them. It always made me feel like they were trying to feel every inch of me without blatantly groping. This usually came later in the song when their hands would accidentally slip to my behind. Yes, this was definitely different. Joe's hand was steady and unmoving, and he was such a natural dancer, my body seemed to follow his lead involuntarily .

As the singer crooned the words, "I WANT TO MARRY YOU AND TAKE YOU HOME," I looked up into the most determined brown eyes I had ever seen. In those moments, I saw my future as clearly as if it were being played on a movie screen. He won the bet, for I did have a spectacular time.

Joe and I were married as soon as I graduated from college, and his main goal is still making me happy, which he does.

-Robin Leberte

"She's Adopted"

"She's adopted," the single most memorable sentence from my childhood. I heard it everywhere, from everyone, for as long as I can remember---in the supermarket, as my mom lifted me into the buggy seat, in the church nursery school, family reunions, everywhere.

"Adopted," such a strange word, not nearly as pleasant as "pretty" or "sweet". But, if that was what I was, and it was important enough for grown-ups to whisper about, it must be something pretty special. It felt funny to hear it over and over in hushed tones I wasn't supposed to hear.

The worst came from nursery school playmates who didn't know what the word meant either except that your mommy isn't your real mommy. " She is so real!" I would scream. That was the day I decided I must ask mama what that blasted word meant. I was so afraid it would hurt her feelings that I would wonder if she was real or not.

So I waited until I was in the bathtub and she was brushing her teeth. I loved the way she looked with her big brown hair and pretty pink white cotton gown. I knew she was real, but I still had to ask. "Mama" I said, "What is.... (oh no, I'm chickening out) what is the softest part of your body?" I knew it was a stupid question, but maybe it would distract her so that the next question wouldn't hurt.

"I don't know," she smiled as she answered me. "What do you think?"

"Oh I know,", I said, "It's your cheek when it rubs against your shoulder, like this."

I showed her what I meant and she said, "You know, I bet you're right."

Then she bent down beside the tub with a blue washrag to scrub me clean. I knew it was time, so I asked her real quickly before I could change my mind again, "What is adopted?" I said

the words quietly, but they hung in the air, on the aqua green tiles, on my Mr. Bubble bottle, on the big white clothes hamper; they were everywhere. Suddenly, I knew I was right when I thought it must be something terrible like "retarded" or "cancer," other words that were so bad grown-ups whispered them.

Mama smiled again, but this time her smile was different. "Oh, honey," she said, "adopted means that you are extra special. It means that your daddy and I picked you out because you were the prettiest, sweetest little baby girl in the whole world."

"But James said that you weren't a real mama," I continued, knowing that I couldn't take the words back and make things the way they were a few moments before.

"Oh ... well...," Mama said as she took a deep breath. "What James meant was that when you were just a little bitty baby, I didn't get to carry you in my stomach until you were ready to be born. Your daddy and I just went and got you at the hospital instead."

"Oh," I said. This was much stranger than I had imagined. Where did all this stuff about carrying babies around in your stomach come from?

Then mama whisked me out of the tub and we played the same dry off games as always and she asked me where the Indian shot me, and I showed her my belly button, and we both laughed, but I could tell Mama wasn't telling me everything because her eyes were filled with tears.

-Robin Leberte

FREEDOM

To this day, whenever I look in the mirror, I remember. The small scar underneath my right eye looks a lot like a laugh line now, but I know where it came from, as did the permanent deadness of that side of my face. The memories flood back vividly anytime I give them a moment to escape. . .

Freedom, absolute, irrepressible, heady freedom! For the first time in my nineteen years I was away from my parents, my hometown and my new boyfriend (who was much more serious about our relationship than I cared to be), released from all my past to pursue a new life--college life. I loved the sound of "away at college". This was my time and I intended to make the most of it.

Until now I had always been pampered and a bit spoiled by my parents but always living up to their expectations, and their expectations were considerable--good grades, good manners and good friends. Goodness overwhelmed me. I was ready to explore other facets of the world.

I silently cursed the rain as I backed out of my parents' garage. It would make the early morning drive even more difficult. The clock on the dash flashed 6:05 a.m. We would have to drive fast to make it back to Auburn in time for my nine o'clock class. My boyfriend,Joe, had offered to drive me to his parents' house so I would only have two hours behind the wheel. He worries too much, I thought to myself. Doesn't he know what it means to be free?

We chatted all the way to his parents' house where I quickly ran in to say goodbye to his mom. After a quick kiss and a hug from my boyfriend, I was on my way. Almost as an afterthought, he reached across me and pulled the seatbelt tight across my shoulder. "Be careful", he said "the roads are really terrible. As a matter of fact, I'm going to lead you back to the highway myself--follow me." I rolled the window up with one hand and pulled the safety belt loose with my other. "Who needs restraints?" I thought to myself, besides I hate the way those things wrinkle my clothes.

I could barely see his red truck through the rain and haze as he backed down the drive ahead of me. I switched on the defrost and turned up the radio as we headed down the steep hill. The next thing

I saw was the headlights of a van heading straight for me. I instinctively hit the brakes but with the water on the road, I only went faster.

Crash! Then silence as everything stopped. Suddenly, Joe opened my door and I felt his arms encase me as he dragged me from the front seat. The impact from my head had broken the steering wheel and blood was everywhere. I caught a glimpse of my face in the rearview mirror as he pulled me out of the car and I knew things would never be the same. The entire right side of my face was caved in like it was made of eggshell. The bridge of my nose was cracked in half.

Joe laid me gently down on the wet grass and barked orders to people as they came out of their houses to see what the commotion was about. "Oh Honey, you're gonna be fine" said a lady in a flowered housedress as she placed a dishcloth over my shattered face. She looks so scared, I thought. Colors and noises blended together into a wild kaleidoscope which slowly dimmed as I closed my eyes wishing I could make it all go away.

I couldn't make it go away. The young girl high on freedom died in the crash. A far more serious, reserved young woman survived. I am the one who survived. In those few seconds, I faced my mortality and learned what freedom was truly about. Freedom wasn't breaking away from the past as I had once thought. Freedom was having the courage to be myself. I realized that there was more to being me than simply being a girl with a pretty face. There was much more.

-Robin Leberte

Writing: The Essential Tool
by Lisa Pemberton

I believe that writing is the essential tool for learning at all grade levels and in all subject areas both in and out of school. It is through writing that children and indeed all of us make the connection between what we think and what we understand about the world. E.M. Forester said, "How do I know what I think until I see what I say?" I would add, "If I can't think, how can I learn?"

Writing helps children understand that reading is thinking written down. It has been my experience that children often do not make the connection between the printed word and reading until they actually write down their own thinking and read it to someone else in an effort to make another person understand.

Writing also clarifies children's understanding in math in the same significant way. When children explain a math concept by using language, they must first try to sort through their own thinking before it can be explained in writing. Then understanding of "process" over "product" is apparent. Correct answers become less significant than an understanding of the process itself.

Writing in social studies, science, health, safety, art and music provides a natural way to integrate the curriculum areas. Children simply write about their world. They read their own writing to share their understanding with others, then read other books to answer their own questions.

For these reasons, writing is the skill I teach in reading, English, mathematics, social studies, science, health, safety, art and music. It is not an "add-on" but rather the program itself. It is the way I allow children to think, to ask questions, to clarify answers, to reflect on their understanding and to learn about their world.

I believe that writing is the essential tool which completes the circle of thinking and learning.

Aunt Sarah Lee
by Lisa Pemberton

"Oh, God! I think she's still alive!" Cheryl gasped. I grabbed my sister's hand and stared into the open casket at the body of our aunt, Sarah Lee. Her eyes were closed as if she were sleeping, the sockets sunk back into her head, her mouth stretched into a tight smile. Her skin was gray and wrinkled and layered with a fresh coat of powder from the undertaker's make-up kit. She looked nice for a lady of ninety. But alive? No, she definitely didn't look alive. But then, I'm not sure I can ever remember her looking really alive.

Aunt Sarah Lee was dead from my earliest memories. She was old and blind and waiting for death to rescue her from the half-eaten plate of biscuits and gravy left on the chrome dinette set in the kitchen. She was slumped into a brown vinyl platform rocker in the living room, its arms bleeding white cotton from open wounds, her head leaned back against its shoulder as if resting on a kind friend for comfort. A Rock City coo-coo clock ticked away the minutes of her life, marking the hours with a squawking reminder that the time was near.

Mother took me regularly to view Aunt Sarah Lee's body even though she and Daddy had long buried the marriage that tied Mother to my Aunt Sarah Lee.

"Do you want to see how much I've grown?" I'd ask my aunt when my mother would drag me from my hide-out in the pine thicket behind Dr. McCoin's barn. "You know I can't see," she'd moan, barely rousing enough for me to know that she had not died since the last time I had come 'though she had waited anxiously.

"Oh, but you can feel me," I'd insist determined to make this trip pay off in some way since my own secret fortress had been invaded not by the neighboring Indians but by a call to do a good deed-visit poor, old, blind, and dying Aunt Sarah Lee. I pulled her hand to my face and she hesitantly traced the lines of my nose and mouth and long blond hair.

"Oh, you are beautiful," she'd say. "So much like Alice before she died..." and she began to weave the details of a story that I could never quite understand. "Now, don't cry dear sister. Momma don't mean no harm, going on about you and Ruth and little Billy staying with us. Sam'll get a job real soon and ya'll can get a place of your own. I'll stay up with the baby tonight 'cause I know you've got to be worn out. He's so little and I don't guess your milk has come in real good yet. Now, don't cry so. Here, hold my hand, Alice. Hold on." And she held my hand as if I were some long-lost friend preceding her in death, beating her to the finish line.

"Do you need anything?" I asked, partly because my mother always said that when wanted to leave someone that she didn't really want to visit in the first place. I guess it would've been rude to stand up and shout, "If I have to listen to that story again, I'm going to die first."

It was always the same...same wrinkled skin, same chair, same strange story, even after she was moved to the nursing home and I learned to drive well enough to visit her on Sunday afternoons without Mother reminding me. She lived on and on and after a while, I was numb to her insistence that every time I left, it would be the last time I'd see her alive.

I married and finished college and taught school and had my first child before she died. When the call finally came, I sat staring out the window at the cold of the February morning. A few buttercups blossomed along the sidewalk, teasing the winter, waiting for spring.

Aunt Sarah Lee had out-lived most of her family and friends. The few who remained brought pictures and sat in the parlor of the Fike Funeral home that night and talked for hours. I heard whispers, "Doesn't she look like Alice?" and the cousins and

aunts and uncles passed faded pictures among themselves and looked at me. That was the name Aunt Sarah Lee always called me, even as a child..."Alice."

"She looks real nice." "How's the family?" "Why, I haven't seen you since so and so's funeral," chatted the on-lookers. I forced a smile and slipped out to get a cup of coffee. She did look nice. My family is barely surviving. And no, I don't remember ever seeing you before in my life. The mix of carnations and formaldehyde churned in my stomach. I felt dizzy.

My sister and I straightened the chairs after everyone left that night. I thumbed through the memory book where visitors had recorded their attendance and noticed that someone had filled in the "Family Tree" section of the book. There it was, Alice McMahan, Sam's first wife, Aunt Sarah Lee's sister-in-law, Billy's mother, my grandmother...

I don't know where it had been before then...why it had been such a secret...why her name was never discussed.

My sister and I walked back to the open casket of Aunt Sarah Lee. "She is moving!" Cheryl insisted. Her eyes were still closed as if she were sleeping. She was dead, I assured myself. Then, I noticed a slight movement in the casket, too. I jumped back, startled at the thought of her being alive and yet, feeling silly for even thinking such a thing. I braved another look and realized that the hair pin that held the poor woman's bun had slipped loose and her hair was sliding around her head. Our giggles exploded into laughter by the time we coaxed the undertaker into fixing poor Aunt Sarah Lee's hair. It seemed like a long time before we could recapture the somber mood of the occasion.

Then, I stopped to think. Maybe Aunt Sarah Lee wasn't dead after all. Perhaps, she could tell me more about my grandmother.

Perhaps

If you had been a

Stay-at-home-daddy

Instead of a

See-you-next-month-daddy

You wouldn't feel so

Rotten

And I wouldn't have to say

I love you

Anyway

by

Lisa Pemberton

Tip-Toeing

People afraid to show their feelings
Tip-toeing around
Afraid to touch.
Are they frightened of the response
from others
or themselves?

Pretending that life will always continue
Tip-toeing around
Hiding their emotions.
Are they too busy greeting one another that
they forget to
say good-bye?

Arms cling for the sweet adieu
Tip-toeing around
Words never spoken.
Are they thinking of the one they love
or contemplating
their own mortality?

Cindy Robicheaux

The Fields of Play
by
Cindy Robicheaux

I am aware of the vibration on the ground before they appear. The mass approaches like a herd of wild stallions. As their feet pound the hard ground like hooves, the dust rises up as if to escape a beating. Each breath is a desperate sucking for oxygen to fill their lungs. But just as quickly as the precious air enters, it explodes out.

They rarely speak with words. A look in a certain direction or a turn of a head will indicate the next move.

Their legs are long and fast. The muscles show evidence of use and youthful growth. Their eyes are ever watchful as they concentrate on an object that they all played with as children.

It's amazing to me that they all possess this love for a round, leather ball. I enjoy watching them play. And, that's just what it is to them --child's play-- big boy's play. They attack the ball with determination and wild abandon as they scream like Apache Indians coming in for the kill. The enemy remains behind eating their dust as a victory dance begins at the other end of the field.

Soccer is not THE sport in high school. So, why do they exhaust themselves for an hour running back and forth on a field containing weeds and holes? The only response they can give is "I love soccer."

Praise and recognition for playing does not automatically come. The only praise comes often from the parents on the sidelines--but I think they would rather hear squeals and giggles from some much higher pitched voices.

As I have watched these boys, win and lose over the past several years, I have grown to respect and admire their determination. Their character shines in every game--sometimes good, sometimes bad-very bad . They make no apologies for reacting with frustration in the face of defeat as they know the right things to do, but their body doesn't respond quickly enough.

They have formed a special bond that emerges only when they enter the field of play together as one unit. This bond has been built through many game situations. They have gone past the days when the blame for a costly mistake was hung on a player like a scarlet letter. The words "Win as a team, lose as a team," have taken on real understanding.

This bond among the players will exist for only this time in their lives. They will remember this feeling with warm thoughts and soft laughter as they watch their offspring enter the fields of play as boys and leave as men.

Magic

The young man made the journey to the creek every day at the same time. He wanted to be near the water hole when the beautiful Sacred Dog came down from the hills for a drink.

He met the beautiful creature accidently that first day. He had gone to the creek to cool down and get a refreshing drink. While he was stooping near the stream, he heard the sounds of a large animal moving toward him. Could it be a Sacred Dog?

Bright Moon had heard stories about the wonderful animals that could run like the wind, but he had never seen one. In fact, no one in the village had ever seen a Sacred Dog with their own eyes. Now as Bright Moon slowly stood up and turned toward the sounds, he realized that his heart was beating faster and his knees were beginning to feel weak.

What would the Sacred Dog do when it realized that Bright Moon was there? Would it become angry and stand up on its back legs? The boy had heard stories about the animals when they became angry. He had heard about their heavy feet.

Would the Sacred Dog turn and run away? Bright Moon had heard stories about people who tried to touch a Sacred Dog, just to have the beautiful animal turn at the last moment and run away. He had heard the disappointment in the voices as visitors to his village described moving near the large animals and having them run just before their fingers could touch the long, graceful neck or quivering nose.

These thoughts had raced through the boy's mind, but now the time for thinking was over. The Sacred Dog stepped out of the thicket into the clearing.

When Bright Moon saw the animal he wanted to run. He realized that the Sacred Dog was much larger than he had expected and he knew the animal could run faster than anyone in his tribe. Bright Moon wanted to be anywhere but here on the bank of the creek. He

tried to run but his feet wouldn't move. He felt as though he had become one with the earth.

As the boy watched the magnificent animal, he tried to memorize every detail. He saw the heavy feet and long legs; he saw the long graceful neck and the flowing hair that grew along the neck and between the ears; and then he saw the big brown eyes.

Now Bright Moon was concentrating on those brown eyes. He had learned in his experience with other animals that their eyes can signal you if they are angry, frightened, or if they are willing to become friends.

The Sacred Dog stopped. He lifted his head, and his nostrils quivered as he tested the air. A new scent in the clearing caused the animal to tense his body as he began to search for the danger. His eyes and nose explored the area between where he stood and the cool water.

Suddenly, he located the boy standing quietly by the stream. The animal shook his head and stamped his feet in an attempt to frighten the boy away. Bright Moon didn't move, and the Sacred Dog seemed to reconsider the situation. Maybe there was no danger in the clearing after all. In the past when the Sacred Dog had come near one of these who walk on two legs, he had been frightened by any attempt to touch him. This young one in the clearing had not moved. Maybe there was something different about him. The Sacred Dog took one more step toward the gently flowing stream, watching the clearing carefully and testing the air with his sensitive nose.

Bright Moon took a deep breath. He tried to be very quiet, but the sound of his breath made the Sacred Dog lift his head. The animal looked down at the boy, and the boy was surprised by what he saw in the large brown eyes. Bright Moon saw fear in the eyes of the Sacred Dog!

"He's afraid of me!" thought the boy.

"He's afraid of me!" thought the Sacred Dog.

Then it happened - just like magic. Bright Moon decided to show the animal that there was no reason to be afraid of him, and the Sacred Dog decided to do the same thing.

Each day they visit the clearing at the same time, and each day their friendship deepens. The boy remembers to be quiet and move slowly. He also brings a little corn from his mother's basket as a gift for his new friend. The Sacred Dog remembers to step carefully so as not to crush the boy's toes. He also remembers to speak softly, with a whinney, so that the boy will not be frightened. His gift to the boy is to stand very still while Bright Moon rubs his nose or pats his neck.

Once again the magic of friendship has sparkled and grown between two unlikely candidates. Isn't that the true meaning of magic - something that cannot be explained or understood? Has the magic of friendship ever happened to you? If it has, can you explain how or why it happened? Are you willing to let the magic of friendship happen between you and someone who is very different from you? Are you willing to work hard to be a friend? Remember, the spark of friendship is magic, but the flame of friendship is work.

Marilyn Self

KLN TYME

KLN TYME was printed in bold letters on the license plate of the car in front of me. I was on my way home from the hospital, and the message spotlighted by my headlights hit home.

The purpose of my visit to St. Vincent's Hospital had been two-fold. I visited a young friend and helped her celebrate the birth of her baby girl. Then I went by to begin to say goodby to my Aunt Ada.

On the fifth floor at St. Vincent's, I had celebrated birth. The sweet young girl and her baby will share many years of joy, sadness, love, fear, life. The lights in the room were bright, and the conversation was happy and full of laughter.

On the third floor, I held the fragile, cold hand of a woman I love, and I asked her if we could keep the lights dim. It's so much easier to say goodby in the shadows. It's not so real somehow. Maybe in the darkness she won't read my sorrow. Maybe the darkness will keep my sorrow from adding to her fear.

As I started back to my car, I began to compare the two visits. The excitement and joy of birth, the still quiet and darkness of death. The laughter and subdued quiet tones. The energy and weakness.

Then I compared the people. Young and old, fragile and fragile, hopeful and hopeful, dependent and dependent. Suddenly I found that there was a sameness in the two rooms that I had not seen as I visited. I realized that I had just assumed that the child would have a long life and that the opposite was true of my aunt.

These thoughts led me to realize once again that I have no promise of tomorrow. My thoughts then turned to all the things I have considered as goals, things that must be done for my life to be complete. Now I was in the place I had assigned to Aunt

Ada. I had so much to do and so little time in which to finish all my tasks.

With these ideas racing through my head, I pulled to a stop behind a fancy sports car with a license plate that read KLN TYME. Yes, I have been KLN TYME ! Every day I have allowed time to pass that I will never hold in my hands again. I could have loved more. I could have shared more. I could have written more. I could have cared more.

Today I look at myself as one with only moments left on this earth. When I cry, I really cry; I put my all into every tear. When I sing, I lean back and let the rafters ring. When I look into the face of my son, I really look. When he talks, I really listen; I've stopped skimming. This attitude helps with housework I just remind myself that this could be the last pair of dirty socks I'll ever pick up.

Yes, I've stopped KLN TYME. How 'bout you?

Marilyn Self

The Telling

They sit before me. They all seem to want to snuggle at my knee. Their faces are lifted, and their eyes are fixed on my face. They wait quietly, and we become one.

In my mind I have all the pictures, and I have all the words. The whole world and all of the worlds beyond. And they wait.

When I speak, I tell them of life. I speak words of love. I set sail on the seas with the wind at my back, and they come with me. I show them the clouds and the sun set. I paint the world with the brush of my words, and my canvas is hanging behind their eyes.

The time we spend together sparkles of magic and wonder, and they stay with me all the way. When our journey is complete there is a sadness, and yet joy. For now, behind the eyes of each child hangs the painting of my words. Fresh and new, different, and yet the same. A painting they will always keep, for it is their own.

Marilyn Self

Summer Days

Clear summer days seem hard to come by anymore, especially one that allows the blazing rays of the sun to shine down, scorching the ground far below.

Light, cool breezes stroke the leaves on the majestic oak trees and brush gently against the newly ripened peaches, pushing them back and forth as if they are children playing gaily on a swing set.

As I turn over the moss ladened bricks in the flower garden, my eyes follow insects as they scurry for another place to hide; however, cover is not to be found in the rich, moist soil as I churn the earth with my bare hands.

Crickets, frogs, earthworms, bees, and spiders -- none of these can escape my treacherous efforts, they fear me and I know it.

I am not intentionally trying to destroy their peacefully shaded habitat; I desire only to manicure the remnants of the aged garden that has been allowed to breed uncontrollably.

Mother nature has nurtured thousands of little lives in this small piece of earth, and now I have come and caused chaos.

It almost doesn't seem fair that I, also a creation of God, can destroy a part of his masterpiece. That is how man functions, though, continually working against nature as God tries to protect her.

This incident in the garden is minute in comparison to the tragedy occurring around the entire world -- man

cannot leave a stone unturned, a path untrodden, nor a tree untrimmed.

How thoughtless can we as humans be! We are given a world that has blossomed fruitfully for billions of years, and now we tear her down, bit by bit, with little regard for our future, much less, for hers.

God must be looking down from above weeping and wondering why His creations cannot live together in harmony, working together to keep the beauty alive.

by Julie Stipe

The Rope Swing
by Julie Stipe

I remember the Peace River from my childhood. All the children would rush down to its muddy banks, anxious to be the first one to plunge into its cool, refreshing water. The rope swing hung from an old oak tree whose branches shaded the bank and the streaming water.

I was scared to climb the big tree, but I went up anyway. I crept out along the massive branch. It was so wide I had to grip tightly with my legs. I could feel the scratching of the bark against my thighs; I knew I would have a rash from the abrasive bark, but I didn't care. All I could think of was reaching the rope swing. As I slithered ever so slowly down the rope, I dreamed of the excitement I would have when I hit the water.

My toes and fingers felt every inch of the rope until I reached the huge knot where I rested my feet. The excitement was overwhelming as I began pumping my body, bending my knees slowly, then quickly standing up to make the rope swing far over the water. I could feel my heart pound as I breezed through the cool air. It was like I could fly, a feeling that even if I had let go, I would float away, not fall, but actually float. I eyed the river from above, anticipating the moment of release. I couldn't let go, yet I wanted the moment to last -- the glistening wake of the water as it gently lapped against the bank, the half-covered roots of the old oak that had been washed away by the tide, and the ripples coming from the bark that had fallen from the tree as other children climbed out on the branches toward the swing. It was my swing, though; at that moment no one else in the world existed, just me and the feeling of complete freedom that it gave me.

I released my fingers, a rush came over me, my eyes opened wide as I watched the water come towards me--you see that's how it felt, the water was coming to me. I could feel my blood beating its way to my brain, I became light-headed -- my breath was taken away as I plunged deep into the dark cool waters. I opened my eyes to see nothing, only darkness. I thrashed my arms and legs, struggling to the top, where I could see a rainbow of light. A huge breath of air filled my lungs at once and it was over. I wanted to go again, to feel the thrill, to see the river from so far above. It was all too much to think about as I swam for the bank and hoisted my way up using the oak's roots as steps. I kept imagining the fall -- I wanted to be surrounded by the water again; I wanted to feel the escape.

I may have been only eight years old when I swam in the Peace River, but I still remember the way it felt, cool and stinging to my skin, and the way it made me feel. I want to be lost in its power, just one more time.

Wedding March

I stand behind the closed doors, staring through the glass. My dad whispers something in my ear -- I turn to face him because in my daze I don't hear his words. He says, you look beautiful, baby, don't be nervous. I tell him I feel afraid -- not at getting married to the person who I love most in the world, but rather, all the responsibility that will come with time. He just smiles at me, saying nothing; I suppose he tells me in his silence that he knows it will be difficult at times, but that life will be wonderful. I know he understands my concerns, and that makes me feel better. I hold tighter to his arm, hoping that his confidence will flow through my grasp; I need his strength to help me walk down that aisle.

I can hear the muffled tune of the wedding march through the closed doors. Two women say it's time, and they open the heavy cherry doors. The music penetrates me -- my skin crawls and my body shivers. I feel daddy squeeze my hand that wraps around his arm. We walk slowly up the aisle. I cannot see a single face, only the piercing stare from the sea of eyes. I look at my groom, and he beams at me with a smile that warms my whole body. I smile faintly. My knees shake as dad leads me to mother's pew. She leans forward to greet me; I give her a white rose from my bouquet to show her my happiness. I want my parents to know how wonderful they have made my life so far, and now I am beginning a new life -- I think they know.

As daddy leads me to the bottom of the stairs my groom reaches for my hand and I feel the warmth between our fingertips. I know what love feels like, as he leads me to the altar.

by Julie Stipe

Sara jumped as the train whistle screamed in the night. She had been resting while she waited, so she hadn't seen the light of the engine. The light was piercing, she thought, and it looked like an eye searching the darkness. Sara tried to control her excitement, but decided that it had been too long since the last time she had seen Tom to have any hint of reserve. Afterall, I'm sure he won't believe the news either, she thought as she patted her belly which protruded from her otherwise spindly frame. It had been a long time since their last meeting, seven and a half months to be exact, and during all these days Sara had not told Tom of the baby. How could I, she thought, he would be worried sick. No, I made the right decision. Nothing will compare to seeing the joy on his face.

Sara watched with great intent as several passengers emerged from the sleeping quarters and a group of men from the lounge car. Her intent turned to anxiety as the people brushed past her. Paying no attention, one man bumped her left shoulder as he passed. She turned toward the aching sensation and grabbed at it with her hand. The man turned back and started to speak, and Sara saw the face she had been waiting to see. Tom stared at her bulging belly, but no words came out when he opened his mouth. He stood still as she rushed to him and embraced his trembling torso, she could barely reach around him because of the baby. "I wanted to tell you," she whispered, "but I couldn't, I knew you'd be happy ..." Her words trailed off faintly as the fear in Tom's eyes sent a shiver down her back. The once beautifully intense eyes now were somber and unresponsive. Sara began chattering nonsense, hoping to alleviate the tension.

Tom turned his eyes toward her mid-riff and asked when the baby would be here. In a rush of excitement, Sara said mid-October and that she had already made arrangements for them to be together during the delivery. "I won't be there," Tom stated rather matter of factly. "I reenlisted and will be going to Saigon." Tears began to fall down Sara's face because she knew deep in her heart what those words really meant. She had heard the fighting along the Korean

borders had worsened, and now the U.S. was joining up and Tom was going to war.

"How can you leave me," she screamed at him.

"But I didn't know." He reached for her chin and cupped it gently in his hand, wiping the tears from her cheeks with the other. A light misty rain began to fall as Tom led Sara from the station. They walked in silence.

Sara helped carry Tom's bags up the creaking staircase to their room on the third floor of the old hotel. She kept her eyes fixed on the deep burgundy carpet as she inched her way upward. The color reminded her of blood she thought, as a tingling feeling spread through her body. She ached inside, not from the pitter patter of the baby's feet against her stomach, but from the words shared with Tom at the station, still ringing in her head. They hadn't spoken since. Sara wanted to sit there on the stairs and cry, but she couldn't; she knew it wasn't Tom's fault he was going to war. He is the epitome of patriotism, she thought. He probably believes it is his duty.

Tom watched Sara's tiny feet as she placed them on the carpeted stairs one at a time. He wanted to lift her in his arms, but he felt weak; he could barely drag himself up the three flights. His calf muscles were taut and a streak of pain shot through his back with each step. Finally, he blurted out, "Sara, I'm sorry you had to find out this way."

Sorry, she thought, how can you be sorry for a baby who might not have a father, who might not ever know what happened because of a stupid war. "I know, me too." Sara's words hung in the air as Tom unlocked the door to suite 312.

He took the bag from Sara and went into the bedroom. She collapsed on the couch facing the window, her eyes turned toward the burning orange lights of the small city. What have I done, she thought, as she closed her eyes and focused her attention to the sound of Tom unpacking in the other room. What have we done?

by Julie Stipe

A Grim(m) Tale
Peggy Ann Bullard Swoger

Once upon a time in the land of Beeson Woods there lived a wicked witch named Miss Clause, a woman of independent means. She had been a teacher of the village children since the nineteenth century. She taught with the grammar book open everyday, and the children smoothered in chalky fumes as she stirred the words and hung them on the board to dry.

"Don't touch the words!" she would say. "You don't know the rules for using the words! You don't know the rules for using the words! Don't touch the words until you know enough to get them right. Someday you'll be the guardian of this magic brew."

Then, one day a smiling Miss Newcomer came to Beeson Woods. She let all the children touch the words and at first they were so careful. Just to dare handle sacred words that would make powerful magic--they dared not make any mistakes; but the smiling Miss Newcomer, such a stranger in the Woods, said: "Children, take armloads of words and dance with them!" and she did and the children did. A few words fell and some even cracked but when they put the words together! What delicious sounds and brilliant colors they made. The children were enchanted with the magic they had made.

Suddenly Miss Clause appeared at the door. She saw all her wonderful words, her wonderful rules strewn everywhere. Boy, was she mad!

FRIENDS FOREVER

The move to Alabama was a difficult one for my son. He was twelve years old, just getting into that pre-adolescent stage where everything is a major disruption to his lifestyle.

Tara, on the other hand, being five years old looked at the move as an adventure. She was excited about every part of the move from living in a motel room with our very sweet, but large dog for a week while we waited on our furniture, to the everpresent existence of trees and hills. "Oh, aren't the trees big and pretty. And the hills___it's like we'll be living in the mountains," she said with enthusiasm and excitement.

"How will I ever be able to ride my bike up and down all these lousy hills," grumbled Glenn, our family pessimist. He harbored a pre-adolescent desire to point out the downside of every situation.

"There it is," reported Dad, " the new Trenary abode." We all glanced in the same direction, and before Tara could question her daddy about the meaning of the word "abode," she noticed a little girl and her mother standing on the deck of the house we would occupy.

"Who's that on our porch?" questioned Tara.

"That looks like the little girl that lives across the street and her mother," answered Daddy. "I met the little girl the first day I was here to buy the house. I told her about our family, and every day I've been here since getting it ready for all of us, she has come over and asked when Tara would be moving in. She's six years old and very anxious to make Tara her new friend."

Tara's face beamed as she got out of the car to greet her new friend. Her enthusiasm was not matched by her brother, however, as he said,"Oh no, not another stupid girl. Why do you always get a house that's surrounded by Tara's friends!"

As we ascended the stairs of the deck, more of the face and personality of our neighborhood welcomer was revealed. The face, crystal blue eyes accented by dark eyebrows and deep dimples in the cheeks, was partly hidden by the mother's form. It wasn't until her mother said, "This is Jennifer," that the petite little girl felt confident enough to reveal herself entirely. Apparent now were the spatterings of freckles across her nose and face, once again offset by a warm smile.

From that first moment, Tara and Jennifer became "friends forever." They were different in so many ways. My Tara, a redhead with an outgoing personality and special enthusiasm to experience life to the fullest, and Jennifer, a somewhat shy, beautiful little girl with the same enthusiasm but with a little more reluctance. Jennifer was Jewish/catholic and Tara was methodist, but that did not keep them from attending Vacation Bible School together and spending many hours together preparing for the solos they would sing the night of the closing performance. As I tearfully watched them perform that night, shy, little Jennifer coherced by her outgoing friend Tara, I couldn't help but think how special their relationship really was.

The years went on and Jennifer and Tara were like sisters. For many years, they attended different schools and had different groups of friends at school, but both came home from school each day anxious to spend the rest of their day and most nights with each other. They spent hours fantasizing, pretending they were office managers, dance teachers, or girlfriends looking for their first apartment. They spent hours digging and planting, preparing a walking trail they could walk together each day after school.

During the summers, the two girls were inseparable. They often gathered up their towels and suntan lotion and went to sun at the local pool, or during one phase of their relationship, they confiscated motor bikes belonging to brothers or dads and rode them on the dirt trails that surrounded our neighborhood. Once , led by the redheaded excitement - seeker, the two girls decided to spend the night out on the back deck, moving from roof to deck throughout the night. Reluctantly, Jennifer brought her sleeping bag and large pillow

and followed Tara out. Everything seemed fine until we heard screams followed by the slamming of the door, when the girls abandoned their plans because of the slugs that had joined them for the night. Jennifer led the way then as she rushed to avoid a "slug attack."

Since that first day we saw that little, dimpled girl on the porch of our new house, we seldom took a family vacation without her. Every trip was a major event in the lives of both girls, and the plans that preceded them sometimes lasted for days. Most vacations ended with sunburns, blisters, and pain. It was hard to believe that they wanted to return to the beaches each year, in spite of the disastrous effects. I remember one year, Jennifer was attacked the first day by a jellyfish and had no desire to return to the water again. Why did they enjoy their beachtime so much. They were together, "friends forever."

It wasn't until Tara was in seventh grade and Jennifer was in eighth that both girls attended the same school. Tara was a cheerleader and ran with a very fast crowd. Jennifer ran with another group of kids from her own grade level. However, their social groups were sometimes neglected for the comfort and security of a relationship that had developed for many years and could be found across the street from home. Often, when Tara would get tired of the periodic falseness of her social group, she would call Jennifer, and they would recapture the "realness" of their own relationship.

When Jennifer moved on to the high school leaving Tara at the middle school, she developed a stronger interest in "boys." I felt like Tara sometimes resented that interference in their relationship, because there was less time for the two of them. However, Tara too led a busy life, so they both were very involved in activities that kept them apart. But, the phone calls never stopped and neither girl doubted the security of their special friendship.

One morning, at about 6:00 a.m., the phone rang. Being a mother, my heart jumped and my impulsive mind feared for my children. Where were they? Could something have happened to them? Even before I picked up the receiver, my mind had pinpointed their whereabouts and considered many possibilities. In fearful anticipation, I picked up the phone, never really expecting what would transpire. The caller was Linda, Jennifer's mother. Very calmly, but somewhat perplexed, she proceeded to tell me that the police had just been there to tell them that something had happened to Jennifer and they needed to go to the hospital. She had been given no details and did not feel she needed us to go with Joe, her husband, and her, but she wondered if I would round up her other children, who had spent the night with friends. Shocked, concerned, and most anxious to help, I said, " I'll be glad to. Is there anything Fred can do?"

"Not right now," Linda replied, her voice quivering. "I'll call you from the hospital."

Many things went through my mind during the next hour. I occupied myself with awakening my husband, locating Linda and Joe's other children, and preparing the parents in the home they were visiting for what?--I didn't know. Continually interrupting my activities and concern for Jennifer were my thoughts of Tara and how I could shelter her from what was occuring. I decided not to call at this point, wanting to spare her the anxiety that her father and I were feeling.

All too soon, the answers came with another phone call from Linda. This time, Fred answered the phone and the tears I saw form in his eyes verified what we had feared. Jennifer was dead.

I was glad that Fred had answered the phone this time, because he was able to withhold what I know were his own feelings about the loss of this second daughter that had become so much a part of our family in the last nine years. I broke down and sobbed like a baby, but only for a short time, because I knew I had to do something to protect Tara from what she was about to face.

After making a list of the things we could do for Linda, Fred hung up the phone and came over to comfort me on the couch. We cried together as he told me the story of what had happened.

We knew that Jennifer had spent the night with someone we had never met. We only knew that the girl's name was April, and Tara was not real fond of her. Apparently,

April and Jennifer and four boys had accompanied April's father and his girlfriend on a tour of his favorite hunting grounds in a wagoneer. At this time, all we were told was that they had plunged over a cliff into a ravine of water. Three of the boys and our beloved Jennifer had drowned; the others had escaped.

It wasn't long before Fred began to focus on the list Linda had given him, phone calls to make, things to check on, and I began to focus on how to make things as easy for Tara as possible. I immediately called the house where Tara was spending the night. The parents answered sleepily and agreed to shield Tara from any phone calls and bring her home as soon as possible. I was so afraid that with the amount of fatalities involved, all of them students that Tara and her friends knew well, Tara would be told of Jennifer's death without us there to comfort her. Because of the difference in Jennifer and Tara's ages, some of Jennifer's friends at high school might not be aware of the special relationship she and Tara had, and would not be sensitive in presenting the news to Tara.

Feeling confident that her friend's parents understood the importance of shielding Tara, I turned to helping Fred with the list, planning in my mind a delicate way to tell Tara the news. My thoughts were interrupted by another ring of the telephone. My husband, unsure of my strength to deal with things at this point, once again answered. It was Tara.

Fred told me a few minutes later, as I was not in the room to hear the conversation, Tara had asked him if something had happened to Jennifer. A phone call had reached Tara and she had been told of the accident. She didn't seem to know she was dead, so Fred pretented he knew nothing and suggested she return home, which she did almost immediately.

Later, we discovered that Tara had been told all, but her daddy's claim of ignorance had convinced her it was not true. It wasn't until she came up on the porch and saw our faces that she suspicioned what she had been told was really true.

None of the next few weeks were easy. We went through many phases with Tara. First, she blamed herself because she knew if she had not made plans with her friends that night that she and Jennifer would probably have been together, as they always were when they were both home. She went through shock and no tears, through private tears, and family tears. She went through the requirements of the attendants of three memorial services for three of the accident victims, participating more as a family member in Jennifer's, at Linda and Joe's request.

Jennifer was to be buried in Cincinnati, Ohio, but before she was sent there, Tara had to find her own way to say goodby. She visited Jennifer at the funeral home, needing something to convince her that her friend was gone. She gathered together some momentos of their special times together and placed them in Jennifer's favorite keepsake box. To finalize it all, Tara sat down and wrote a letter to Jennifer as she listened to a tape given to her during her time of grieving. The tape was entitled, "Friends Forever." The letter was included in the special box with the rest of the momentos, and the box was then placed next to Jennifer in her coffin.

Tara found the strength in her present relationships, our family, and Jennifer's family to move on with her life, knowing she probably never again would have a relationship like she had with Jennifer. She finds comfort in her belief that Jennifer lives on in heaven and still considers them "friends forever."

Jo Ann Trenary

ADDICTED - CONFESSIONS OF A TEACHER

By
Laurie Watson

I'm addicted and I don't want help. They say the only way an addict will get better is if the person seeks counseling. But I don't want help, so I guess that has sealed my doom.

Let me tell you my story. It began this summer as the alarm began its incessant, annoying beeping. I tried hard to pry my eyes open to see the time, 6:45, blaring back at me. Moaning, I pulled myself up into a sitting position, my eyes still closed to the world. Why am I doing this to myself? I finally opened my eyes after I had been in the steaming hot water of my shower for a few minutes. Again I wondered, why am I doing this to myself? After all, this is the summer, a time for sun, fun and play. Why, then was I getting up in the early morning to attend a Writing Institute? Because I am an addict. I am addicted to learning.

I wonder if it's the nature of the animal. Do all teachers share this same addiction? I don't think so. But I do know of some others who share this same affliction, my colleagues in this summer's adventure.

This could be the reason I subscribe to many magazines, searching for creative ideas to bring to the classroom. After all, that is the "high" of this addiction, seeing the children excited about school, eager to learn.

This compulsion leads me to every garage sale that crosses my path. It's why I look in every store, at every book with a teacher's eye - how can I use this with my class? Don't throw that box or bucket away! I can use them to store materials. My husband is a long suffering victim of this "pack rat" side effect of my addiction.

Some people would call this dedication to my job. I am dedicated to my students, dedicated to my family, dedicated to myself and dedicated to teaching but not to my job. A job includes a workplace, an employer, etc. I would have the same attitude, the same addiction in any setting. I would prefer to think of it as a commitment to my profession.

Why do I feel like this? The craving need that I can learn more, that I must learn more, more and then some more. I like learning new information and new tricks for using old information. I enjoy reading everything I can get my hands on. I am a "dealer" of knowledge trying to hook kids to my drug, my addiction, learning.

THE HOW COME BOY

By

Laurie Watson

What's that, Mom ?
It's a fire hydrant, son.
What's it for ?
It helps the fireman
to put out fires.
How come ?
Because the firemen
can't carry enough water
on their trucks.
How come ?
Because the firemen's
truck doesn't have
a tank big enough.
How come ?
Because that's the way
it was built.
How come ?
BECAUSE !!!!

I thought the "how comes"
Would drive me mad
---until there were no more.

No more curiosity.
No more questioning.
No more understanding.
No more learning.

Please, son, please
Ask me "how come" again.